SCRUTINY

REISSUED IN 20 VOLUMES
WITH AN INDEX AND
RETROSPECT

VOLUME X
1941–42

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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SCRUTINY

A Quarterly Review

X

1941–42

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
1963

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PUBLISHED BY
THE SYNDICS OF THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Bentley House, 200 Euston Road, London, N.W.1
American Branch: 32 East 57th Street, New York 22, N.Y.
West African Office: P.O. Box 33, Ibadan, Nigeria

First issued quarterly at Cambridge 1932–53
Reissued in 20 *volumes, with index* 1963

Printed in the United States of America

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Vol. X. No. 1. JUNE, 1941.

SCRUTINY

A Quarterly Review

Edited by

D. W. HARDING L. C. KNIGHTS F. R. LEAVIS

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CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,—

You have kindly invited me to make some answer to Mr. Hill's criticism of my *Marxism: A Postmortem* in the December issue of *Scrutiny*. After reading Mr. Hill's review, however, I feel that any adequate reply would take up more of your space than the subject deserves. Mr. Hill's review consists chiefly of quotations torn out of their contexts; and to defend myself adequately on each of the counts which he raises would virtually involve a rewriting of the entire book

What I find most surprising both in Mr. Hill's review and in other criticisms of the book which have been written by Marxists is that they do not make the slightest attempt to answer my two chief contentions. They content themselves with arguing that I have misunderstood Marx. I remarked in a note on Chapter Four that ' in order to anticipate criticisms, it should perhaps be pointed out that every argument used in this and the following section has been used many times before. Readers will find all these arguments discussed in books written in defence of Communism: for example, in the Webbs' *Soviet Communism*. They will find also, however, that Communists have made no serious effort to confute them.' I can only repeat this statement with reference to Mr. Hill's review. My main theses, which were supported both by theoretical arguments and by historical evidence, were: firstly, that the likelihood of a proletarian revolution in any industrialized nation was so small that it could be dismissed from practical consideration; and secondly, that any attempt to realize the Marxist ideal of a planned economic system would mean, in practice tyranny, inequality, inefficiency, and imperialist war. Mr. Hill does not merely fail to present any plausible reply to these two contentions; he does not even give any indication that this was what my book was about. The first duty of a reviewer, I should have thought, was to state fairly the subject matter of the book which he was reviewing.

Mr. Hill's complaints that I have misunderstood Marx appear to be due chiefly to the fact that he approaches the text of the Marxist gospels with the attitude of a believer in verbal inspiration; any deviation from the orthodox phraseology causes him to howl

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with indignation. One example will suffice. Mr. Hill objects to my statement that ' inequalities of distribution cause struggles between the different classes '; what Marx said, he insists, was that class struggles were provoked by questions not of distribution but of ownership. He fails to realize (the point being nowhere made plain in the Marxist gospels for the guidance of the naive believer) that ownership is important only because it involves control of distribution; where it does not include such control it is an empty legal formula. When ownership is at stake in a class struggle between peasants and landlords or workers and capitalists, it is because a change in ownership will mean a change of distribution. By refusing to look beyond the legal formula of ownership the Marxist is able to argue that there can be no class conflict in the Soviet Union; industry is ' owned ' by the workers. My contention is that such ' ownership ' is meaningless as long as distribution is controlled (to their own advantage) by the Stalinist bureaucracy.

A number of Mr. Hill's other complaints are provoked by my attempts to shows that Marxist dogma contains a number of contradictions. He objects, for example, to the fact that I use both the Second and the Third International to illustrate the practical consequences of Marxism. My argument was that each International had developed a different side of Marxism, and that the reasons for their opposition was to be found in the theoretical deficiencies of the original doctrine. Similarly, Mr. Hill accuses me of ' either deliberate misrepresentation or mere ignorance ' because I could discover no justification in terms of Marxist theory for enjoying Dante and Shakespeare. Obviously I was aware that Marx liked Dante and Shakespeare and that Lenin liked Pushkin and Tolstoy. My point was that in liking feudal and bourgeois poets Marx and Lenin were being inconsistent with their own theories.

These examples of Mr. Hill's methods of argument will perhaps be sufficient to convince readers of *Scrutiny* that his review was not wholly fair. As to the other points which he raises, I can only suggest that anybody who is sufficiently interested should read the book. Meanwhile, I am still waiting for some believer in a Communist revolution to present answers to my main arguments.

H. B. PARKES.

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TOWARDS A MUSICAL ACADEMY

I.

NOW that the function of education needs increasingly precise definition—now that we more than ever need to understand clearly what we expect from education and what we might do to ensure the fulfilment of these expectations—it seems pertinent to add to those considerations of the educational needs of the liberal spirit (particularly in their literary applications) which have already appeared in this periodical a few comments on the meaning of the phrase ' musical education,' with specific reference to the place such education ought to occupy in a civilized society.

There is to-day fairly uniform agreement that musical education isn't all it might be: but this healthy dissatisfaction has proved unavailing partly because those who uphold the present system have forestalled complaints by pointing out that things aren't as bad as they used (ten, twenty, thirty years ago?) to be, as though this were adequate ground for complacency; and partly because those who condemn the present system are prone to indulge in the sentimental reflection that musical education as it was (to take the stock example) to the Elizabethans—musical education as a participating activity, part and parcel of everyday life—is dead and done for anyway. This notion is sentimental because it ignores the fact that, whether or no our civilization is inferior to, it is fundamentally distinct from, that of the Elizabethans, that it has its own problems which are not incapable of solution. If it is true that our approach to musical education must necessarily be more self-conscious, then for that very reason it becomes not less, but more urgent and important that we should attempt some such approach. The attitude of superiority to academic institutions can anyway only do harm to however well-intentioned a cause, because it gives those within the pale a legitimate right to insinuate that the outsider who sneers is either an ignorant amateur, or a crank, or both. A little good-will on both sides is essential if the closed barriers which at present shut off the ' academic ' musician from contact with the

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rest of the civilized world are either to be broken down or voluntarily relinquished.

That it is important that the barriers should be removed can hardly be disputed, for the main difficulty in deciding what one means by musical education lies in that quality of abstraction in the nature of the art which tends to encourage a divorce between music and the other great branches of knowledge (or thought or feeling). Probably this difficulty could be effectively counteracted only during the early stages of education, in which case some conception of the rudiments of musical grammar and of musical history should be taught in schools not as a specialized activity but as one of the great departments of human knowledge, as central as literature or science or mathematics. The idea of music as an art to which only the technically initiated have access should be rigorously guarded against, and I know of no way of ensuring this except to stress continually the relation between the musical manifestations of the human spirit and the verbal, plastic, pictorial, mathematical and even historical ones. Certainly under the present system the potentially musical child may often languish for lack of impetus to his imagination, whereas a relatively unmusical child will be pushed through a course which it finds acutely boring merely because it has betrayed a certain aptitude for—or manual dexterity on—a particular instrument, usually the piano. Such instrumental prowess would seem to bear sometimes an almost fortuitous, and always a very complex, ratio to essential ' musicality '; in any case one cannot work out that ratio merely by dumping a pupil down at a keyboard.

This is a difficulty that extends to a more advanced stage of musical education than that tentatively offered by the day-school, for the main function of musical academies as at present constituted is undoubtedly the manufacture of performers. They have other functions; but by far the majority of the students attend academies in order to gain official recognition of their efficiency on a particular instrument. No one would want to suggest that a desire to perform is to be deplored: but probably about one-twentieth of these students—at a liberal estimate—have talent sufficient to justify a professional career; the rest would be better employed in educating themselves to form a responsible and discriminating audience for the talented. Theoretically, the economic objection might be urged

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that it's no use talking airily about discriminating audiences when the aim of most of these young men and women is eventually to eke what precarious livelihood they can from their professional studies. But this objection is no more than theoretical because only a very small percentage of the students make much use of their technical dexterity in their subsequent careers as teachers, accompanists, church- or even cinema-organists: all they require from their studentship is the 'certificate,' and this might as well be awarded for a humane education as otherwise. Neither the ability to play an instrument, nor a knowledge of the grammar of music, is, by itself, a contribution towards musical education: the simplest, and yet apparently the most difficult, lesson for a musician to learn is that one cannot be 'musically' educated without being emotionally educated as well. Indeed it is difficult to understand how, without some general, humane, musical education it is possible to train a satisfactory interpreter at all. At this point, the circle completed, we are in a position to ask what the basis of this general musical education might be. In a phrase I would summarize it as the inculcation of the Historical Perspective.

II.

I think it may be because music is a relatively abstract art—its medium remote from the material of everyday life—that our judgments about it are prone to be more humanly fallible than they are, perhaps, with any other art. We imagine ourselves as standing at this particular minute point in time, looking back almost with complacence at the ever-rolling stream, able to assess from our lofty eminence the size and contour of each particular wave or ripple. We forget how we fail in consistency—how to-day's daemonic Mozart was the childlike cherub of yesterday. We lack humility; brazenly proclaiming the subjectivity of our responses we assert its almightiness, make no effort to temper it with knowledge and understanding of the kind of significance men of ages and creeds different from our own may have seen in their art. Egoistically we fall, therefore, into three connected kinds of error, the first of which may be described as errors arising from insensitive response to emotional climates; the second, as errors related to problems of social necessity; and the third, as purely technical errors consequent upon the two previous failings.

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Of these errors the first, that relating to emotional climates, is by far the most serious: I will give one main example of it—the reputation, in this country, of Jean-Baptiste Lully. Amateurs and academic musicians alike all know—they can read it in any of the history books—that although Lully is a composer of 'some historical importance' with reference to the Beginnings of Opera and the Development of the Orchestra, his music is of antiquarian interest only, being artificial,superficial, frigid and altogether devoid of aesthetic import, as indeed one can only expect from the product of a decadent state of society. No one, least of all academy students, is ever given an opportunity to put these generalisations to the test since the artificiality, superficiality and frigidity of Lully's music are the reasons offered for never performing it. Instead, Lully is offhandedly compared to his great contemporary Purcell, whose human, passionate and dramatic music (itself almost completely unknown less than twenty years ago) is presumably supposed to sum up the entire achievement of the seventeenth century, and is left to bury his head in the sands of oblivion as best he may.

Even without an intimate knowledge of Lully one cannot help feeling uneasy about these glib assumptions, cannot help suspecting that it may be idiotic to look to Lully for the same kind of satisfaction that one finds in Purcell, cannot help remembering that if he lived in a decadent and superficial society, that society was great enough to produce Racine. When one considers the treatment that Racine himself used to be subjected to at the hands of English critics —considers how all the opprobious adjectives now heaped on the composer were one time the property of the writer—one is bound to tread more cautiously still. French critics, one recalls, have always placed Lully among the great composers of history—as profound beneath his calm impersonal stylization as the Purcell whom they consider 'toujours anglais, toujours sentimental, toujours en mode mineur.' Bonnet, in his *History de la Musique* published in 1715, said of Lully 'Did he wish to depict Love, what heart is not melted? And what melody, what naturalness! Did he wish to express Grief, do not the rocks groan with him?' Would hearts have melted and rocks have groaned for a maker of courtly trifles? May it not be that we find Lully's music dull because we listen to it arrogantly, without regard to its conventions and its own

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emotional climate, if indeed we listen to it at all?

I have dealt at some length with the case of Lully not for its inherent importance but because it is representative. I might have chosen countless other examples. For instance, if the church music of Couperin le Grand—music as profound as anything written in the eighteenth century, not excepting Bach—were even as well known as his clavecin pieces which are always dismissed as ' charming ' but ' artificial ' drawing-room confections, perhaps we might begin to understand why Couperin himself certainly did not regard his little pieces as being deficient in seriousness or even emotional intensity merely because their duration in time was brief and their sonority not excessive. Even Bach himself, as Schweitzer has shown, might be better performed if he were better understood; and the further one goes back in musical history the greater the possibilities of misapprehension must necessarily be. The poignantly dramatic Monteverde or Vittoria offer a more immediate satisfaction to our ears than the relatively impersonal Palestrina, but that does not mean that they are more ' profound.' Nor does it mean that they are more profound than (say) Guillaume de Machaut. Indeed the ignorance of and indifference to all pre-sixteenth century music displayed in academic institutions is perhaps the most damaging of all evils consequent upon a deficiency of historical perspective. Can one seriously maintain that for several centuries European composers—including men of the most phenomenal versatility of intellect such as Machaut and Jacopo da Bologna—tottered helplessly around on the hollow crutches of their fourths and fifths because they failed to ' discover ' the diatonic third? Isn't it more reasonable to conclude that they used fourths and fifths because they liked them? No one thinks of referring to the ' progress ' of the English language from Chaucer to Shakespeare; it is accepted that they incarnate distinct civilizations and people making any pretentions to literary cultivation are willing to make the small effort necessary to overcome the slight unfamiliarity of Chaucer's language. Similarly, the conventions of thirteenth and fourteenth century polyphony may be very different from those of nineteenth century homophony, but it is the smuggest obtuseness to claim that the latter are more mature. If one *listened* to Perotin or Jacopo or Perusio—as one can do a little with the help of the gramophone—one might begin to realize that such a contention is no less absurd

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than that of the history book which claimed to trace the evolution of European music from the ' infancy ' of Monteverde to the ' maturity ' of Richard Strauss!

Inevitably, therefore, the second class of errors—those connected with social necessity—is bound up with the first, since almost all errors of emotional climate arise from a misguided attempt to listen to music *in vacuo*, or in an environment inappropriate to it. One cannot hope to respond ' appropriately ' to a musical composition if one is oblivious of the kind of social significance the composer intended it to have. One cannot sensitively listen to almost all so-called primitive musics and the better part of European music up to the sixteenth century if one doesn't realize that the connection between music and society, even between music and behaviour, was here an extraordinarily direct and immediate one, designed as ritual to induce a certain physiological state in the listener's nervous system. (This is to some extent true even of Palestrina, which is why he, rather than Vittoria or Lasso, is, in the suave hypnotism of his mellifluous linear writing, the supreme musical expression of the Catholic ritual). For Bach music was still ' an harmonious euphony to the glory of God ' and if we fail to realize this our notions of him will be partial and distorted: but he is also a professional craftsman making music for a secular and social need, so that he inaugurates the Professional period which culminates in Haydn and Mozart. Nor can one understand the music of the nineteenth century aright if one doesn't realize why the ' professional ' relation between music and society gave way to the idea of the composer as tragic hero and why in the twentieth century there have been a number of attempts to provide artificially a relationship that should be organic—attempts of which the most innocent is Gebrauchmusik and the most insidious (as well as the most futile) the allying of music with propaganda.

The technical errors dependent on these first two classes of error concerning emotional climate and social necessity are too numerous to describe here in any detail ; the most I can do is to indicate their range. They include misapprehensions about the phrasing of Bach, particularly his basses; misapprehensions about the nature of eighteenth century ornamentation which is attributed to a desire to compensate for the inferior mechanism of the ' old instruments,' notwithstanding the fact that it appears equally in vocal music and

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that Couperin himself said ' that it is not a matter of choice to introduce such ornaments as one wishes. I declare that my compositions should be executed as I have marked them and that they will never produce a certain impression on persons of real taste so long as everything I have indicated is not observed to the letter '[1]; misconceptions about the balance of wood-wind and strings, and the importance of the harpsichord, in the eighteenth-century orchestra ; failure to appreciate the distinction in kind between viol and violin,[2] harpsichord and cembalo, baroque organ and modern ; and all manner of fallacies of tempo and interpretation arising from a romantic upbringing.

I hope I have established that an Historical Perspective is an indispensable basis for a true musical culture. But what kind of practical training, it will be asked, is likely to conduce to such an attitude? Assuming that a student proceeds to his musical academy with a working knowledge of the grammar of music and that he is at least willing to acquire immediately that ability at score-reading without which he can have first-hand experience of only a microscopic proportion of the music of European history, I believe that such an outlook would emerge naturally from his technical studies providing that these studies were given intelligent direction. In the next section I will attempt to indicate what this direction might be.

III

In trying to gain, from first-hand experience, a coherent idea of the unfolding tradition of European music one has continually to bear in mind the interaction of four allied aspects of it. These are (i) the composer's creative faculty ; (ii) the society of which he is a unit ; (iii) the resources available to him—which will be conditioned by (ii) ; and (iv) the idioms he uses—which will be conditioned by all the three previous points in varying degrees, according to the vitality of his personality and the relatively traditional or anarchic nature of the society he lives in. Of course it is impossible to study all these aspects simultaneously ; but we shall understand none of them thoroughly if we aren't at least aware of the influence upon

[1]François Couperin: *L'Art de toucher le clavecin.*

[2]*cf.* Hubert le Blanc: *Défense de la Basse de Viole contre les Entreprises du Violon et les Prétentions du Violoncelle.* 1740.

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it of the others. For instance, one could not study the great monophonic period of European music from plainsong and troubadours to Ars Antiqua without enquiring into the question of why the human voice was the pre-eminent medium when the relation between music and society was prevailingly ritualistic. In considering the nature of the idiom and its relation to the ' material resources ' of the voice one would further seek—by way of a number of quasi-digressions into folk-song and possibly non-European musics—to relate the origins of melodic speech to the fundamentals of the human voice and the harmonic series, would examine the nature of melodic subtlety and the expressive advantages, as well as (or rather than) the limitations of music conceived in terms of a single line. Only by studying the sixteenth century idiom in relation to the impetus behind it—the Church and an extremely homogeneous domestic milieu—can one appreciate the full significance of its idiom's derivation from the implications of the voice, its convention of singableness, its melodic rather than metrical notion of rhythm, its polyphonic conception of discord as movement before the concord's repose, the immense importance of the polyphonic technique as a factor governing composition. With composers such as Purcell or Bach it would be impossible to separate various modifications in the resources available to them—for instance the increasing use of relatively mechanical instruments—from the nature of the environment they lived in, and it would be impossible to sense the feel of their idioms without regard to the impact their unique creative personalities made on their communities and on their material and vice versa. Study of the fugue with reference to Bach would also elucidate the connection between polyphony and counterpoint—counterpoint as a means of systematizing polyphonic writing—and would indicate how this systematization should be a technical manifestation of the objective, ' classical ' organization of experience, and in what ways this is attributable to the composer's genius on the one hand, or to the homogeneous social conditions he flourished in on the other. Obviously an examination of the problem of symphonic form and of the implications of diatonicism could start from the antithesis between an instrumental and vocal technique in an aristocratic society; nor would a study of chromaticism and romanticism (Gesualdo, Liszt, Wagner, Delius, Berg) avail much if it did not indicate the connection

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between the homophonic conventions, the decay of stable tonalities, and the notion of 'self-expression' and of 'autobiographical' drama. 'Musical' history, moreover, cannot properly be separated from the history of the dance and the stage and to a lesser degree even poetry. All these subjects offer more or less complex problems: but I hope I have, even if with rather ironic compression, indicated the centrality of the studies which I have in mind.

By 'studying' musical compositions I mean examining, feeling, listening to, performing the scores until one knows them in one's blood and bones: that is the only stable basis for a musical education. In order to examine and perform sensitively a certain amount of historical or sociological knowledge is essential, but there should be nothing irksome about that, if it is directed to the fuller flowering of the music as such. The student might well work exercises in the manner of different composers or schools of composers, so long as he realizes that such exercises are nothing to do with composition but merely help him to understand the functioning of these idioms more clearly and to respond more delicately, therefore, to their emotional climate. In the long run there can, anyway, be no division between technical training and historical studies—the training of taste and discrimination—since technique is merely the outward symbol of an inner grace (or disgrace). To take a very simple instance, a technical training which did not enable one to indicate in technical terms why Chabrier is a composer of comic genius whereas Massenet is for the most part a hack inculcating the same kind of response as the Hollywooden hack of to-day whose idiom to some extent derives from him, would be next to useless; and any knowledge of the workings of music one could acquire without even realizing that this distinction existed, would have no more bearing on musical studies than facility at the unravelling of crossword puzzles has bearing on literature. Similarly it is a truism of academic criticism that Berlioz couldn't write fugues, presumably because of defective technique, whereas, as I've had occasion to point out before, the only question worth asking is not Are Berlioz's fugues 'really' fugues, but do they, in actual performance, come off? Fugue is not *a* form but, as Tovey used to say, a texture, a way of writing, a consequence of the polyphonic outlook. Nor are there any absolutes of form: the only means of testing the authenticity of musical forms—including one's own—is to

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listen to them. And to learn to listen to music is in truth the most difficult discipline of all. To the attaining of it, technical exercises and historical studies are merely a means; once attained, it leads by implication to the making of value-judgments about the music which is experienced. This is why a course on contemporary music, combined with exercises in criticism, should be indispensable to any musical academy. Those who are unable to listen intelligently to and to discriminate between the works of their contemporaries are unlikely to achieve much vital experience of the music of any period; first-hand response to the unfamiliar should be regarded not as a *jeu d'esprit* but as a fundamental aspect of education.[3]

An obvious criticism of all I have written above is that a musical education of the type here tentatively suggested would be the labour of a lifetime. My answer to this is, of course it would. Education is not static: we should all of us feel proud if, by the day we die, we have begun to acquire anything of an education at all. No one would suggest that a student who goes to a university to study literature for three years has, when that time has elapsed, completed his education; he has just about begun it, and this would be true of a musical education too, even though you would never gather, from the way music is taught at present, that this art also is one of the highest manifestations of the human spirit. All one could hope to do in a few years' training would be to help the student to *listen,* and to direct his attention to those problems most worth considering. Detailed study of the whole of the music of the European tradition would be as unnecessary as it is impossible. How many of the fundamental issues would not be raised by thorough study of (say) Machaut, of English music in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (with particular reference to the shift in the social background), of Bach, and of a representative list of composers including Monteverde, Haydn, Beethoven, Liszt, Berlioz, Rossini and Stravinsky? In any case, by comparing and relating technical traits one would learn to appreciate the human motives that underlie them; one would acquire a technical training with true direction, not in a vacuum but as applied to the living

[3]I have written further on this point in an article on *The Approach to Modern Music,* published in *The Listener,* August 17, 1939.

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tissues of musical thought, in all their delicacy, their unceasing fluctations. This training would become the richer as one's experience of music increased; and increase it would, for one would now be listening with an enjoyment the deeper for being critical, and the more critical for being based on understanding and love. Only if the stress falls on fundamentals can the mind be trained and the sensibility given that poise and direction—that faculty of organizing one's responses, of knowing where one stands and what one is about—without which education is little more than a futile (if decorative) encumbrance.

IV.

Some such course as that suggested above—and I am aware that the framing of the syllabuses would be a delicate matter—should in my opinion be the basis of a humane musical education. It would be a training in the essentials of musical tradition and of musical aesthetic, a training in listening which would enable one to respond as fully as possible to the complexities of musical thought, to the organic (as opposed to the paper) evolution of linear contour and harmonic stress. (Responding to music merely as a matter of academic technical procedures is after all as remote from the actualities of musical experience as reponding to it merely for its power of evoking visual images, or of giving impulse to private nostalgias or day-dreams). This course, directing their minds towards the source of a stable musical cultivation, would be obligatory on all students; but it would not, of course, preclude specialized studies. Of these the most important would naturally be creative composition.

It has always seemed to me illogical that the manufacture of music should be included in the syllabus as a requirement of academic proficiency. The manufacture of verses is mercifully not considered indispensable to an education in literature. If some of the time spent on learning to manipulate (say) the structure of fugue were spent on listening to and understanding how Buxtehude or Bach[4] used it, the standard of original composition would not

[4]But the anonymous manual on Fugue recently published by the Cambridge Press as a guide to Mus.Bach. students tells us that Bach is not a good model.

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deteriorate but improve. That every student, regardless of talent or desire, should be expected to erect specious musical edifices has nothing whatever to do with musical education. Those who have it in them to compose will need no such spurious encouragement; knowledge and love of created music of the past and present will be impetus enough. Those who have no such desire will save their own time and their professor's if they content themselves with learning to be good listeners—an ideal, as we have seen, by no means facile.

Granting that the teaching of composition may be, but is not always, an end worth pursuing, it remains a fact that we teach it not so much with a faulty system as with no system at all. There is a vague inarticulate notion that the method is somehow historical, but it begins, not with plainsong and Ars Antiqua, but with diatonic harmony because (the argument runs) this is the type of music the student has been brought up on. Even here the method lacks logic, since the student has in fact been nurtured on late nineteenth century harmony, which is regarded as too sophisticated a starting-point, so back we go to a kind of harmony resembling that of the four-part Bach chorale. Then we move on to chromatic harmony, and then back to the sixteenth century to acquire a little counterpoint. The process scarcely recommends itself to reason. A case might be made out for maintaining that diatonic harmony is *not* the place to begin, precisely because it is the student's musical bread-and-butter; and this opinion was proffered in an article on *Harmony and Composition* published in *Scrutiny* for September, 1939.

Providing that teachers of sufficient imagination and musical understanding could be found, I believe that the method advocated in this previous article (to which the reader is here referred) would be the most rewarding in the teaching of creative composition. With the educational facilities offered by the historical section of the course I have suggested in these pages, particularly the knowledge of the sixteenth century idiom they would have acquired from the study of that classic among musical text-books, R. O. Morris's *Contrapuntal Technique in the Sixteenth Century*, and from Knud Jeppeson's brilliant handbook on Palestrina's use of the dissonance, would-be composers will work out their own salvation the more easily if their approach to creative work is by way of melody,

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polyphony and the human voice. Having a stable traditional background they will gain a clearer understanding of the essentials of musical texture through the creation and combining of original melodic lines, however unpretentious, than they would through years of training in academic harmony and *canto fermo* counterpoint.

The disability of Mr. Rubbra's scheme lies, of course, in the inevitable shortage of truly creative teachers; and this is why, if any more or less rigid system of ' rules ' is to be propagated, those of the sixteenth century seem to me the best, because the sixteenth century idiom is the closest approach which music has made to a formalized system evolved from the implications of the human voice and the basic resources of the art of sound. If you dispense with the creative teacher, there is even something to be said for the study of ' strict ' text-book counterpoint in so far as it does, as an astonishingly diverse number of authorities ranging from Professor Dent to Roussel, Satie, Hindemith and Krenek have pointed out, encourage fluency and clarity in the manipulation of musical material. It must, however, be clearly understood that *canto fermo* counterpoint can teach no essential discipline that is not implicit in the creative counterpoint advocated by Mr. Rubbra, so long as there are creative teachers capable of offering the student advice. And Holst's objection to the strict system still seems to me to hold. If, he said, the only point of C.F. exercises, which bear no vital relation to the counterpoint of the sixteenth century, is to introduce a ' discipline,' then why not apply a different discipline occasionally, for the sake of variety; why not work exercises in which all *concords* are forbidden? This objection needn't be as facetious as it sounds: for if this kind of technical training is considered desirable I would certainly advocate that some work should be done on Krenek's twelve-tone *Studies in Counterpoint,* whether the young composer has duodecuple aspirations or not. If possible, the theoretical work of Hindemith should be studied also.

Besides having the same fundamental basis, creative studies would also link up very intimately with historical ones in so far as true creative composition entails always the most scrupulous concern for the material resources of music—the medium one is using and the means whereby ' states ' of mind and feeling are to be transmogrified into the stuff of sound. And

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this brings us to the function of the performer—the last aspect of academic training which I want to discuss.

V.

I began this article by deploring the manner in which the manufacture of performers is regarded as perhaps the primary function of musical academies; almost the last point I want to make is that the manufacture of performers should be almost the last function. Of course, everyone should acquire sufficient proficiency on an instrument or instruments to enable him to pursue adequately his own musical interests and to educate himself; but the performances of us all, from clumsy stumblers to virtuosi, would improve if they started from the ability to listen to the music we are trying to perform: to be a great interpreter without having acquired a general musical education is an impossibility. In the first place one needs knowledge and understanding to appreciate the composer's intentions; in the second place one needs creative zest of no common order to make these intentions live in actual performance: so that interpretation is always a matter of the subtlest reconciliation of divergent tendencies. How subtle just one example will indicate. One part of the interpreter's task is to present objectively 'the notes as the composer wrote them,' yet so clumsy and inadequate a symbolization is musical notation that it requires a creative effort merely to translate the symbols into sound. For instance we are told that expert violinists play neither in just nor in equal temperament but in a mixture of both according to the character of particular passages—melodic scale passages or passages bearing the implications of diatonic harmony. It therefore follows that even 'the notes as the composer wrote them' is no clearly defined ideal; and the problem becomes immensely more complex when we add to the (inevitably) partially personal translation of the would-be objective symbols the entirely personal recreation of the orignal experience which is due to the psychological make-up of the performer himself. To be a great interpreter may not call for as important a kind of genius as is necessary to be a great composer: the case of Busoni suggests that it does require genius of a similar order.

That the standard of orchestral players to-day should be higher than it has ever been is, of course, a very fine tribute to our wide-

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spread instrumental proficiency; yet it cannot be denied that the prodigious number of manually dexterous solo performers has a seamy side with reference to the general conditions of musical taste in that the more we hear *superficially* convincing performers the more insidiously we grow to be satisfied with the second-rate. It is a remarkable and suggestive fact that to-day, when instrumental technique has never been on a higher *general* level of competence, the art of singing—that which is most intimately connected with the evolution of the organic musical forms—has declined to an abject pitifulness such as cannot be paralleled in musical history.

About the personal element in performance which only taste and imagination can supply one can say, of course, next to nothing, nor can ' instruction ' be given in these qualities. But about the knowledge which should lie behind them one can say a great deal and in the long run this too will depend on taste and on the possession of the historical perspective. It is curious that although no-one would venture to perform on the (to us) more esoteric instruments such as the harpsichord or viol without some study of the ways in which the character of the instrument has influenced the idiom of the music written for it, such knowledge is usually regarded as the province of exclusively antiquarian specialists. A comparison of a performance on the harpsichord by Wanda Landowska of (say) Bach's *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* with a performance of this work—even Edwin Fischer's—on the modern piano establishes once and for all the absurdity of attempting to perform this music on any instrument other than the one for which it was triumphantly composed—establishes the harpsichord, moreover, as an instrument utterly different in idiom and sonority from the piano but in no way inferior, indeed in many respects much more magnificent: and no-one who has heard Scarlatti or Couperin sensitively played on a harpsichord can fail to appreciate how intimately this music is bound up with its medium—the clear resonance, the precision of line, the metallic percussive effects, the suggestion of a delicate ornamental brush-work—and how sensitive performance cannot be achieved without knowledge, an historical basis to one's sympathy and personal interpretation. Yet with music and mediums more familiar how seldom is this the case. How many times is Bach ' interpreted ' with the intensest passion and the best intentions, how seldom is his music played or sung with that knowledge of his *own* intentions—

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how he wanted his music phrased, in what varying proportions the different sonorities—without which imagination however sincere and fingering however dexterous are merely misplaced energy. Even Chopin, a composer who lends himself naturally to the serpentine 'personal' approach, would be better performed if his interpreters had some notion (which is not impossible of attainment) of how Chopin played his own music and of how he fits into the tradition of European music. (Horovitz I think conveys the authentic Chopin impression).

It often used to be referred to as an instance of the remoteness of academic theory from the living evolution of musical form that students could be put through a complete course of sixteenth-century counterpoint without realizing that the rigid 'rules' they were taught to apply were not an arbitrary systematization which occured inexplicably at this period of history, but grew naturally out of the facts of song;—without realizing for instance that discords had to be 'prepared' simply because voices couldn't, without instrumental aid or the familiarity with harmonic effects that instruments entail, sing notes standing in discordant relation to each other except in so far as they were created by the movement of singable melodic progressions starting from consonance. The work of Morris has perhaps corrected this kind of fallacy; yet it is an instance that is in no wise essentially different from an ignorance that in performers is commonplace and passes without comment. It should be obligatory on all intending performers to acquire as a basis for their technical work a general musical cultivation and sufficient knowledge to render their interpretations, if not products of genius, at least worthy of respect.

VI.

Musical academies should be the focal points of the musical life of the society that supports them: for this reason I would advocate that among the specialized studies—composing, interpreting, conducting and so forth—courses should be offered on Music and the Theatre and Music and the Cinema. The first of these would embrace, of course, some kind of survey of the evolution of opera and ballet, but would be centred in the possible relationship between music and the theatre in the present day, with particular reference to the work in this field of the American

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composer Marc Blitzstein. In the course on Music and Cinema students would be able to tackle the essential problems by comparing cinema-scores by Aaron Copland or Hans Eisler with those of the average hack, and the more intelligent and creative criticism of popular functional music that could be encouraged the better the efficiency of the function and the spiritual health of the populace. ' Serious ' professional musicians in this country are blithely unconcerned about popular functional music because it is so ' debased '; they forget that only if they bother their high and mighty heads about it is it ever likely to be less so. This is why, despite the poverty of most American creative writing, the work of men like Blitzstein and Copland induces a feeling of hopefulness that it is difficult to experience on this side. I have no doubt that if there is to be a future for music as a social manifestation, musical academies will have to acquire a sense of social responsibility. Music must be an aspect of human life, not the property of the academic or the aesthete.

VII.

This point, as well as the one about the prevailing ignorance of performers, is not of merely esoteric interest. The all-pervasiveness of a superficial musical culture to-day—the vast amount of music passively heard, particularly through mechanical means—makes the upholding of the highest musical values more important than it has ever been. We need critical discrimination in music more desperately than in any of the other arts if only because music exerts so insidiously direct an effect on the nervous system. Discrimination means, of course, more sensitive *listening*, and one knows that, if people are too lazy and apathetic to make an effort themselves, one can do nothing to persuade them to listen to music by talking about it because the art is by nature too abstract and intangible to render anything one says convincing to those not willing to be convinced. Musical instruction can never do more than give direction to eager and enquring minds.

But for, at least, these eager and enquiring minds the very hermetic nature of music brings the richest compensations. Precisely because it is, as Roussel said, of all arts the most ' inaccessible ' it is the strongest fortress of ' spiritual values ' in times when these values are most violently besieged. One should

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not need to justify further the urgency of musical education, however remote it may seem from ' the present conflict.'

W. H. MELLERS.

APPENDIX.

The materials the student has to work with are, first, the scores of the music he is studying ; and secondly the instruments (including the gramophone) to make these scores audible. Having stated that clearly it might be helpful to append a list of books which are relevant to the conception of musical education put forward in these pages:

R. O. Morris, *Contrapuntal Technique in the Sixteenth Century.*
Knud Jeppeson, *Palestrina's Use of the Dissonance.*
Ernst Krenek, *Studies in Counterpoint.*
Arnold Dolmetsch, *The Interpretation of the Music of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.*
Albert Schweitzer, *J. S. Bach.*
A. Pirro, *L'Esthétique de J. S. Bach.*
H. C. Colles, *Voice and Verse.*
Bernard van Dieren, *Down Among the Dead Men.*
Cecil Sharp, *English Folksong: Some Conclusions.*
Donald Francis Tovey, *The Integrity of Music and Musical Textures.*

Although the final section on the one-time English Renaissance has dated somewhat, *Voice and Verse* is an important book which has never received the attention it deserves. The two Tovey volumes have just been published, and summarize Tovey's own work as a musical educator. Had review copies arrived before I had completed this article, I would have included references to them in the body of the text, for they contain many remarks of value on the connection between Technique and Aesthetics. A review of the books will appear in the next number of *Scrutiny*.

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REVALUATIONS (XIV):

JOSEPH CONRAD

(I)

AMONG the several unfulfilled promises that a glance through the files of *Scrutiny* would reveal is an announcement, of some half-dozen years back, phrased *Conrad, the Soul and the Universe*. The exasperation registered in this formula explains, perhaps, why the article was never written. For that Conrad has done classical work is as certain as that his classical status will not rest evenly upon his whole *œuvre*, and the necessary discriminations and delimitations, not being altogether simple, clearly oughtn't to be attempted in any but a securely critical frame of mind. He has, of course, long been generally held to be among the English masters; the exasperation records a sense that the greatness attributed to him tended to be identified with an imputed profundity, and that this ' profundity ' was not what it was taken to be, but quite other, and the reverse of a strength. The final abandonment of the article may have been partly determined by Mr. E. M. Forster's note on Conrad that appeared in *Abinger Harvest:*

> ' What is so elusive about him is that he is always promising to make some general philosophic statement about the universe, and then refraining with a gruff disclaimer . . . Is there not also a central obscurity, something noble, heroic, beautiful, inspiring half-a-dozen great books, but obscure, obscure? . . . These essays do suggests that he is misty in the middle as well as at the edges, that the secret casket of his genius contains a vapour rather than a jewel; and that we needn't try to write him down philosophically, because there is, in this direction, nothing to write. No creed, in fact. Only opinions, and the right to throw them overboard when facts make them look absurd. Opinions held under the semblance of eternity, girt with the sea, crowned with stars, and therefore easily mistaken for a creed.'

—This might well have gratified the exasperation, and made its expression seem unnecessary.

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Mr. Forster, however, doesn't attempt discriminations or precisions (his note is a reprinted review of *Notes on Life and Letters*). And he doesn't suggest those manifestations of the characteristic he describes in which we have something simply and obviously deplorable—something that presents itself, not as an elusively noble *timbre*, prompting us to analysis and consequent limiting judgments, but as, bluntly, a disconcerting weakness or vice. Consider, for instance, how *Heart of Darkness* is marred.

Heart of Darkness is, by common consent, one of Conrad's best things—an appropriate source for the epigraph of *The Hollow Men;* 'Mistah Kurtz, he dead.' That utterance, recalling the particularity of its immediate context, represents the strength of *Heart of Darkness:*

> 'He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision—he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath—
>
> "The horror! The horror!"
>
> I blew the candle out and left the cabin. The pilgrims were dining in the mess-room, and I took my place opposite the manager, who lifted his eyes to give me a questioning glance, which I successfully ignored. He leaned back, serene, with that peculiar smile of his sealing the unexpressed depth of his meanness. A continuous shower of small flies streamed upon the lamp, upon the cloth, upon our hands and faces. Suddenly the manager's boy put his insolent face in the doorway, and said in a tone of scathing contempt—
>
> "Mistah Kurtz—he dead."
>
> All the pilgrims rushed out to see. I remained, and went on with my dinner. I believe I was considered brutally callous. However, I did not eat much. There was a lamp in there—light, don't you know—and outside it was so beastly, beastly dark.'

This passage, it will be recognized, owes its force to a whole wide context of particularities that gives the elements here—the pilgrims, the manager, the manager's boy, the situation—their specific values. Borrowing a phrase from Mr. Eliot's critical writings, one might say that *Heart of Darkness* achieves its overpowering evocation of atmosphere by means of 'objective correlatives.' The details and circumstances of the voyage to and up the Congo are present to us as if we were making the journey

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ourselves and (chosen for record as they are by a controlling imaginative purpose) they carry specificities of emotion and suggestion with them. There is the gunboat dropping shells into Africa:

'There wasn't even a shed there, and she was shelling the bush. It appears the French had one of their wars going on thereabouts. Her ensign dropped limp like a rag; the muzzles of the long six-inch guns stuck out all over the low hull; the greasy, slimy swell swung her up lazily and let her down, swaying her thin masts. In the empty immensity of earth, sky and water, there she was, incomprehensible, firing into a continent. Pop, would go one of the six-inch guns; a small flame would dart and vanish, a tiny projectile would give a feeble screech—and nothing happened. Nothing could happen. There was a touch of insanity in the proceeding, a sense of lugubrious drollery in the sight; and it was not dissipated by somebody on board assuring me earnestly there was a camp of natives—he called them enemies!—hidden out of sight somewhere.

We gave her her letters (I heard the men in that lonely ship were dying of fever at the rate of three a day) and went on. We called at some more places with farcical names, where the merry dance of death and trade goes on in a still and earthy atmosphere as of an overheated catacomb . . .'

There is the arrival at the Company's station:

'I came upon a boiler wallowing in the grass, then found a path leading up the hill. It turned aside for the boulders, and also for an undersized railway-truck lying there on its back with its wheels in the air. One was off. The thing looked as dead as the carcass of some animal. I came upon more pieces of decaying machinery, a stack of rusty nails. To the left a clump of trees made a shady spot, where dark things seemed to stir feebly. I blinked, the path was steep. A horn tooted to the right, and I saw black people run. A heavy dull detonation shook the ground, a puff of smoke came out of the cliff, and that was all. No change appeared on the face of the rock. They were building a railway. The cliff was not in the way or anything; but this objectless blasting was all the work going on.

A slight clanking behind me made me turn my head. Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path. They walked

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erect and slow, balancing small baskets full of earth on their heads, and the clink kept time with their footsteps. Black rags were wound round their loins, and the short ends behind waggled to and fro like tails. I could see every rib, the joints of their limbs were like knots in a rope; each had an iron collar on his neck, and all were connected together with a chain whose bights swung between them, rhythmically clinking. Another report from the cliff made me think suddenly of that ship of war I had seen firing into a continent. It was the same kind of ominous voice; but these men could by no stretch of imagination be called enemies. They were called criminals . . .'

There is the grove of death:

'At last I got under the trees. My purpose was to stroll into the shade for a moment; but no sooner within it than it seemed to me that I had stepped into the gloomy circle of some Inferno. The rapids were near, and an uninterrupted, uniform, headlong, rushing noise filled the mournful stillness of the grove, where not a breath stirred, not a leaf moved, with a mysterious sound—as though the tearing pace of the launched earth had suddenly become audible.

Black shapes crouched, lay, sat beneath the trees, leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair. Another mine of the cliff went off, followed by a slight shudder of the soil under my feet. The work was going on. The work! And this was the place where some of the helpers had withdrawn to die.

They were dying slowly—it was very clear. They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing earthly now, —nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation, lying confusedly in the greenish gloom . . . These moribund shapes were free as air and nearly as thin. I began to distinguish the gleam of the eyes under the trees. There, glancing down, I saw a face near my hand. The black bones reclined at full length with one shoulder against the tree, and slowly the eyelids rose and the sunken eyes looked up at me, enormous and vacant, a kind of blind, white flicker in the depths of the orbs, which died out slowly.'

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By means of this art of vivid essential record, in terms of things seen and incidents experienced by a main agent in the narrative, and particular contacts and exchanges with other human agents, the overwhelming sinister and fantastic ' atmosphere ' is engendered. Ordinary greed, stupidity and moral squalor are made to look like behaviour in a lunatic asylum against the vast and oppressive mystery of the surroundings, rendered potently in terms of sensation. This mean lunacy, which we are made to feel as at the same time normal and insane, is brought out by contrast with the fantastically secure innocence of the young harlequin-costumed Russian (' son of an arch-priest . . . Government of Tambov '), the introduction to whom is by way of that copy of Tower's (or Towson's) *Inquiry into Some Points of Seamanship*, symbol of tradition, sanity and the moral idea, found lying, an incongruous mystery, in the dark heart of Africa.

Of course, as the above quotations illustrate, the author's comment cannot be said to be wholly implicit. Nevertheless, it is not separable from the thing rendered, but seems to emerge from the vibration of this as part of the tone. At least, this is Conrad's art at its best. There are, however, places in *Heart of Darkness* where we becomes aware of comment as an interposition, and, worse, as an intrusion, at times an exasperating one. Hadn't he, we find ourselves asking, overworked ' inscrutable,' ' inconceivable,' ' unspeakable ' and that kind of word already?—yet still they recur. Is anything added to the oppressive mysteriousness of the Congo by such sentences as:

> ' It was the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention '?

The same vocabulary, the same adjectival insistence upon inexpressible and incomprehensible mystery, is applied to the evocation of human profundities and spiritual horrors; to magnifying a thrilled sense of the unspeakable potentialities of the human soul. The actual effect is not to magnify but rather to muffle. The essential vibration emanates from the interaction of the particular incidents, actions and perceptions that are evoked with such charged concreteness. The legitimate kind of comment, that which seems the inevitable immediate resonance of the recorded event, is represented here:

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'And then I made a brusque movement, and one of the remaining posts of that vanished fence leaped into the field of my glass. You remember I told you I had been struck at the distance by certain attempts at ornamentation, rather remarkable in the ruinous aspect of the place. Now I had suddenly a nearer view, and its first result was to make me throw my head back as if before a blow. Then I went carefully from post to post with my glass, and I saw my mistake. Those round knobs were not ornamental but symbolic; they were expressive and puzzling, striking and disturbing—food for thought and also for the vultures if there had been any looking down from the sky; but at all events for such ants as were industrious enough to ascend the pole. They would have been even more impressive, those heads on the stakes, if their faces had not been turned to the house. Only one, the first I had made out, was facing my way. I was not so shocked as you may think. The start back I had given was really nothing but a movement of surprise. I had expected to see a knob of wood there, you know. I returned deliberately to the first I had seen—and there it was, black, dried, sunken, with closed eyelids,—a head that seemed to sleep at the top of that pole, and, with the shrunken dry lips showing a narrow white line of the teeth, was smiling too, smiling continuously at some endless and jocose dream of that eternal slumber.

I am not disclosing any trade secrets. In fact, the manager said afterwards that Mr. Kurtz's methods had ruined the district. I have no opinion on that point, but I want you clearly to understand that there was nothing exactly profitable in those heads being there. They only showed that Mr. Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts, that there was something wanting in him—some small matter which, when the pressing need arose, could not be found under his magnificent eloquence. Whether he knew of this deficiency himself I can't say. I think the knowledge came to him at last—only at the very last, but the wilderness had found him out early, and had taken on him a terrible vengeance for the fantastic invasion. I think it had whispered to him things about himself which he did not know, things of which he had no conception till he took counsel with this great solitude—and the whisper had proved irresistibly

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> fascinating. It echoed loudly within him because he was hollow at the core . . . I put down the glass, and the head that had appeared near enough to be spoken to seemed at once to have leaped away from me into inaccessible distance.'

—That the ' admirer of Mr. Kurtz,' the companion of the narrator here, should be the fantastically sane and innocent young Russian is part of the force of the passage.

By such means as it illustrates we are given a charged sense of the monstrous hothouse efflorescences fostered in Kurtz by solitude and the wilderness. It is a matter of such things as the heads on posts—a direct significant glimpse, the innocent Russian's explanations, the incidents of the progress up the river and the moral and physical incongruities registered; in short, of the charge generated in a variety of highly specific evocations. The stalking of the moribund Kurtz, a skeleton crawling through the long grass on all fours as he makes his bolt towards the fires and the tom-toms, is a triumphant climax in the suggestion of strange and horrible perversions. But Conrad isn't satisfied with these means; he feels that there is, or ought to be, some horror, some significance he has yet to bring out. So we have an adjectival and worse than supererogatory insistence on ' unspeakable rites,' ' unspeakable secrets,' ' monstrous passions,' ' inconceivable mystery ' and so on. If it were only, as it largely is in *Heart of Darkness,* a matter of an occasional phrase it would still be regrettable as tending to cheapen the tone. But the actual cheapening is little short of disastrous. Here, for instance, we have Marlow at the crisis of the episode just referred to:

> ' I tried to break the spell—the heavy, mute spell of the wilderness—that seemed to draw him to its pitiless breast by the awakening of forgotten and brutal instincts, by the memory of gratified and monstrous passions. This alone, I was convinced, had driven him out to the edge of the forest, towards the gleam of the fires, the throb of drums, the drone of weird incantations; this alone had beguiled his unlawful soul beyond the bounds of permitted aspirations. And, don't you see, the terror of the position was not in being knocked on the head—though I had a very lively sense of that danger too—but in this, that I had to deal with a being to whom I could not appeal in the name of

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anything high or low . . . I've been telling you what we said—repeating the phrases we pronounced—but what's the good? They were common everyday words—the familiar vague sounds exchanged on every waking day of life. But what of that? They had behind them, to my mind, the terrific suggestiveness of words heard in dreams, of phrases spoken in nightmares. Soul! If anybody had ever struggled with a soul, I am the man. And I wasn't arguing with a lunatic either . . . But his soul was mad. Being alone in the wilderness, it had looked within itself, and, by heavens! I tell you, it had gone mad. I had—for my sins, I suppose—to go through the ordeal of looking into it myself. No eloquence could have been so withering to one's belief in mankind as his final burst of sincerity. He struggled with himself too, I saw it—I heard it. I saw the inconceivable mystery of a soul that knew no restraint, no faith, and no fear, yet struggling blindly with itself.'

—Conrad must here stand convicted of borrowing the arts of the magazine-writer (who has borrowed his, shall we say, from Kipling and Poe) in order to impose on his readers and on himself, for thrilled response, a ' significance ' that is merely an emotional insistence on the presence of what he can't produce. The insistence betrays the absence, the willed ' intensity ' the nullity. He is intent on making a virtue out of not knowing what he means. The vague and unrealizable, he asserts with a strained impressiveness, is the profoundly and tremendously significant:

> ' I've been telling you what we said—repeating the phrases we pronounced—but what's the good? They were common everyday words—the familiar vague sounds exchanged on every waking day of life. But what of that? They had behind them, to my mind, the terrific suggestiveness of words heard in dreams, of phrases spoken in nightmares.'

—What's the good, indeed? If he cannot through the concrete presentment of incident, setting and image invest the words with the terrific something that, by themselves, they fail to convey, then no amount of adjectival and ejaculatory emphasis will do it.

> ' I saw the inconceivable mystery of a soul,' etc.

—That, of course, is an ambiguous statement. I see that there is a

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mystery, and it remains a mystery for me; I can't conceive what it is; and if I offer this inability to your wonder as a thrilling affair of ' seeing an inconceivable mystery,' I exemplify a common trait of human nature. Actually, Conrad had no need to try and inject ' significance ' into his narrative in this way. What he shows himself to have successfully and significantly seen is enough to make *Heart of Darkness* a disturbing presentment of the kind he aimed at. By the attempt at injection he weakens, in his account of Kurtz's death, the effect of that culminating cry:

> ' He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision—he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath—" The horror! The horror "! '

—The ' horror ' there has very much less force than it might have had if Conrad had strained less.

This final account of Kurtz is associated with a sardonic tone, an insistent irony that leads us on to another bad patch, the closing interview in Brussels with Kurtz's ' Intended ':

> ' The room seemed to have grown darker, as if all the sad light of the cloudy evening had taken refuge on her forehead. This fair hair, this pale visage, this pure brow, seemed surrounded by an ashy halo from which the dark eyes looked out at me. Their glance was guileless, profound, confident, and trustful. She carried her sorrowful head as though she were proud of that sorrow, as though she would say, I—I alone know how to mourn for him as he deserves.'

It is not part of Conrad's irony that there should be anything ironical in this presentment of the woman. The irony lies in the association of her innocent nobility, her purity of idealizing faith, with the unspeakable corruption of Kurtz; and it is developed (if that is the word) with a thrilled insistence that recalls the melodramatic intensities of Edgar Allan Poe:

> ' I felt like a chill grip on my chest. " Don't," I said in a muffled voice.
>
> " Forgive me. I—I—have mourned so long in silence—in silence . . . You were with him—to the last? I think of his loneliness. Nobody near to understand him as I would have

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understood. Perhaps no one to hear . . ."

"To the very end," I said shakily. "I heard his very last words . . ." I stopped in a fright.

"Repeat them," she murmured in a heart-broken tone.

"I want—I want—something—something to live with."

I was on the point of crying at her "Don't you hear them?" The dark was repeating them in a persistent whisper all around us, in a whisper that seemed to swell menacingly, like the first whisper of a rising wind. "The horror! the horror!"

"His last word—to live with," she insisted. "Don't you understand I loved him—I loved him—I loved him!"

I pulled myself together and spoke slowly.

"The last word he pronounced was—your name."

I heard a light sigh and then my heart stood still, stopped dead short by an exulting and terrible cry, by the cry of inconceivable triumph and of an unspeakable pain.

"I knew it—I was sure!" . . . She knew. She was sure.'

Conrad's 'inscrutable,' it is clear, associates with Woman as it does with the wilderness, and the thrilling mystery of the Intended's innocence is of the same order as the thrilling mystery of Kurtz's corruption: the profundities are complementary. It would appear that the cosmopolitan Pole, student of the French masters, who became a British master-mariner, was in some respects a simple soul. If anyone should be moved to question the propriety of this way of putting it, perhaps the following will be found something of a justification:

'Woman and the sea revealed themselves to me together, as it were: two mistresses of life's values. The illimitable greatness of the one, the unfathomable seduction of the other, working their immemorial spells from generation to generation fell upon my heart at last: a common fortune, an unforgettable memory of the sea's formless might and of the sovereign charm in that woman's form wherein there seemed to beat the pulse of divinity rather than blood.'

This comes from a bad novel, one of Conrad's worst things, *The Arrow of Gold*. It is a sophisticated piece of work, with a sophistication that elaborates and aggravates the deplorable kind of

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naïvety illustrated in the quotation. Not that the author's talent doesn't appear, but the central theme—and the pervasive atmosphere—is the 'unfathomable seduction' of the 'enigmatic' Rita; a glamorous mystery, the evocation of which (though more prolonged and elaborated) is of the same order as the evocation of sinister significance, the 'inconceivable' mystery of Kurtz, at the close of *Heart of Darkness*. If any reader of that tale had felt that the irony permitted a doubt regarding Conrad's attitude towards the Intended, the presentment of Rita should settle it.

'Woman' figures in *The Rescue*, the book that in publication preceded *The Arrow of Gold* (both came out just after the last war, though *The Rescue* belongs essentially to Conrad's early period). The glamour here is a simpler affair—less sophisticated and more innocent. But if *The Rescue* lacks the positive badness of *The Arrow of Gold*, it is, on a grand scale, boring in its innocence. The seduction of Woman as represented by Mrs. Travers is less insistently and melodramatically 'unfathomable' than in the later book, but cannot sustain the interest Conrad demands for it; so to say that it is, in the formal design, adequate to balancing Heroic Action as represented by Lingard—King Tom, idealized seaman-adventurer—is not to say anything very favourable about the whole. *The Rescue*, in short, is an Academy piece—'sombre, colourful, undeniably a classic' the reviewers may have said, and its Grand Style staging of the conflict between Love and Honour (a kingdom at stake) against a sumptuously rendered *décor* of tropical sea, sunset, and jungle is, in its slow and conscientious magnificence, calculated to engender more deference than thrill, and so can't even be recommended as good boy's reading—though it offers little to adults. The book, in fact, is not altogether a surprising kind of thing to have come from a sailor of pertinacious literary talent and French literary education. The reason for bringing it in just here is to enforce the point that Conrad, for all his sophistication, exhibits a certain simplicity of outlook and attitude. About his attitude towards women there is perceptible, all the way through his literary career, something of the gallant simple sailor.

The sailor in him, of course, is rightly held to be a main part of his strength. It is not for nothing that *Heart of Darkness*, a predominantly successful tale, is told by the captain of the steamboat—told from that specific and concretely realized point of view:

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appraisal of the success of the tale is bound up with this consideration. But the stress up till now has fallen upon Conrad's weaknesses. It is time to ask where the strength may be found in its purest form. There will, I think, be general approval of the choice of *Typhoon* as a good example. But I am not sure that there is as general a recognition of just where the strength of *Typhoon* lies. The point may be made by saying that it lies not so much in the famous description of the elemental frenzy as in the presentment of Captain MacWhirr, the chief mate Jukes and the chief engineer Solomon Rout at the opening of the tale. Of course, it is a commonplace that Conrad's distinctive genius comprises a gift for rendering the British seaman. But is it a commonplace that the gift is the specific gift of a novelist, and (though the subtler artist doesn't run to caricature and the fantastic) relates Conrad to Dickens? Consider, for instance, this:

> 'He was rather below the medium height, a bit round-shouldered, and so sturdy of limb that his clothes always looked a shade too tight for his arms and legs. As if unable to grasp what is due to the difference of latitudes, he wore a brown bowler hat, a complete suit of a brownish hue, and clumsy black boots. These harbour togs gave to his thick figure an air of stiff and uncouth smartness. A thin silver watch-chain looped his waistcoat, and he never left his ship for the shore without clutching in his powerful, hairy fist an elegant umbrella of the very best quality, but generally unrolled. Young Jukes, the chief mate, attending his commander to the gangway, would sometimes venture to say, with the greatest gentleness, "Allow me, sir,"—and possessing himself of the umbrella deferentially, would elevate the ferrule, shake the folds, twirl a neat furl in a jiffy, and hand it back; going through the performance with a face of such portentous gravity, that Mr. Solomon Rout, the chief engineer, smoking his morning cigar over the skylight, would turn away his head in order to hide a smile. "Oh! aye! The blessed gamp . . . Thank 'ee, Jukes, thank 'ee," would mutter Captain MacWhirr heartily, without looking up.'

Consider the exchanges between Captain MacWhirr and Jukes over the Siamese flag, deplorably, poor Jukes feels ('Fancy having a ridiculous Noah's ark elephant in the ensign of one's ship')

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substituted for the Red Ensign. Consider the accounts of the home backgrounds of MacWhirr and the chief engineer.

It is to be noted further that these backgrounds in their contrast with the main theme of the tale afford a far more satisfactory irony (it is, in fact, supremely effective) than that, in *Heart of Darkness*, of the scenes at Brussels. At the same time it is to be noted that there is in *Typhoon* no sardonic Marlow, commenting on an action that he is made to project; whereas, though *Heart of Darkness* is given from the point of view of the captain of the steamboat, that captain *is* Marlow—Marlow, for whom Conrad has more than one kind of use, and who is both more and less than a character and always something other than just a master-mariner. For comment in *Typhoon* we have the letters home of Solomon Rout, the chief engineer, and the letter of Jukes to his chum. In short, nothing in the story is forced or injected; the significance is not adjectival, but resides in the presented particulars—the actors, the incidents and the total action: we are given the ship, her cargo and her crew of ordinary British seamen, and the impact on them of the storm.

The ordinariness is, with a novelist's art, kept present to us the whole time; the particular effect of heroic sublimity depends on that.

> ' And again he heard that voice, forced and ringing feebly, but with a penetrating effect of quietness in the enormous discord of noises, as if sent out from some remote spot of peace beyond the black wastes of the gale; again he heard a man's voice—the frail and indomitable sound that can be made to carry an infinity of thought, resolution and purpose, that shall be pronouncing confident words on the last day, when heavens fall, and justice is done—again he heard it, and it was crying to him, as if from very, very far—" All right." '

—Conrad can permit himself this, because the voice is that of the unheroically matter-of-fact Captain MacWhirr, whose solid specific presence, along with that of particularized ordinary sailors and engineers, we are never allowed to forget:

> ' A lull had come, a menacing lull of the wind, the holding of a stormy breath—and he felt himself pawed all over. It was the boatswain. Jukes recognized these hands, so thick and enormous that they seemed to belong to some new species of man.

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'The boatswain had arrived on the bridge, crawling on all fours against the wind, and had found the chief mate's legs with the top of his head. Immediately he crouched and began to explore Jukes' person upwards, with prudent, apologetic touches, as became an inferior.'

Or take this:

'The boatswain by his side kept on yelling. "What? What is it?," Jukes cried distressfully; and the other repeated, "What would my old woman say if she saw me now?"

'In the alleyway, where a lot of water had got in and splashed in the dark, the men were still as death, till Jukes stumbled against one of them and cursed him savagely for being in the way. Two or three voices then asked, eager and weak, "Any chance for us, sir?"

"What's the matter with you fools?" he said brutally. He felt as though he could throw himself down amongst them and never move any more. But they seemed cheered; and in the midst of obsequious warning, "Look out! Mind that manhole lid, sir," they lowered him into the bunker. The boatswain tumbled down after him, and as soon as he had picked himself up he remarked "She would say, 'Serve you right, you old fool, for going to sea'."

'The boatswain had some means, and made a point of alluding to them frequently. His wife—a fat woman—and two grown-up daughters kept a greengrocer's shop in the East-end of London.'

The seamen are their ordinary selves, the routine goes forward in the engine-room, and the heroic triumphs of the *Nan-Shan* emerge as matters-of-fact out of the ordinariness:

'"Can't have . . . fighting . . . board ship"'

says Captain MacWhirr through the typhoon, and down into the 'tween-deck, into the human hurricane of fighting coolies, go Jukes and his men as a routine matter-of-course, to restore order and decency:

'"We have done it, sir," he gasped.

"Thought you would," said Captain MacWhirr.

"Did you?" murmured Jukes to himself.

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" Wind fell all at once " went on the Captain.
Jukes burst out: " If you think it was an easy job—"
But his captain, clinging to the rail, paid no attention.
" According to the books the worse is not over yet." '

And the qualities that, in a triumph of discipline—a triumph of the spirit, have enabled a handful of ordinary men to impose sanity on a frantic mob are seen unquestionably to be those which took Captain MacWhirr, in contempt of ' Storm-strategy,' into the centre of the typhoon. Without any symbolic portentousness the Captain stands there the embodiment of a tradition. The crowning triumph of the spirit, in the guise of a matter-of-fact and practical sense of decency, is the redistribution—ship devastated, men dropping with fatigue—of the gathered-up and counted dollars among the assembled Chinese.

In *The Shadow Line,* also in common recognition one of Conrad's masterpieces (it is, I think, superior to *Heart of Darkness* and even to *Typhoon*), we have the same art. It has been acclaimed as a kind of prose *Ancient Mariner.* and it is certainly a consummately sinister and beautiful evocation of enchantment in tropic seas. But the art of the evocation is of the kind that has been described; it is not a matter of engendering ' atmosphere ' adjectivally, by explicitly ' significant ' vaguenesses, insistent unutterablenesses, or the thrilled tone of an expository commentator, but of presenting concretely a succession of particulars from the point of view of the master of the ship, who, though notably sensitive, is not a Marlow, but just a ship's master; an actor among the other actors, though burdened with responsibilities towards the crew, owners and ship. The distinctive art of a novelist, and the art upon which the success of the prose *Ancient Mariner* essentially depends, is apparent in the rendering of personality, its reactions and vibrations: the pervasive presence of the crew, delicately particularized, will turn out on analysis to account for the major part of the atmosphere. The young captain, entering the saloon for the first time and sitting in the captain's chair, finds he is looking into a mirror:

' Deep within the tarnished ormolu frame, in the hot half-light sifted through the awning, I saw my own face propped between my hands. And I stared back at myself with the perfect

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detachment of distance, rather with curiosity than with any other feeling, except of some sympathy for this latest representative of what for all intents and purposes was a dynasty; continuous not in blood, indeed, but in its experience, in its training, in its conception of duty, and in the blessed simplicity of its traditional point of view on life . . .

'Suddenly I perceived that there was another man in the saloon, standing a little on one side and looking intently at me. The chief mate. His long, red moustache determined the character of his physiognomy, which struck me as pugnacious in (strange to say) a ghastly sort of way.'

The disobliging and disturbing oddity of the mate turns out to be due to the sinister vagaries and unseemly end of the late captain:

'That man had been in all essentials but his age just such another man as myself. Yet the end of his life was a complete act of treason, the betrayal of a tradition which seemed to me as imperative as any guide on earth could be. It appeared that even at sea a man could become the victim of evil spirits. I felt on my face the breath of unknown powers that shape our destinies.'

The sinister spell that holds the ship is characteristically felt in terms of contrast with the tradition and its spiritual values, these being embodied in the crew, a good one, who carry on staunchly against bad luck and disease. The visiting doctor himself is 'good' in the same way. The story ends, it will be noted, on the unexpected parting with the faithful Ransome, the exquisitely rendered seaman with a voice that is 'extremely pleasant to hear' and a weak heart:

'"But Ransome," I said, "I hate the idea of parting with you."

"I must go," he broke in. "I have a right!" He gasped and a look of almost savage determination passed over his face. For an instant he was another being. And I saw under the worth and the comeliness of the man the humble reality of things. Life was a boon to him—this precarious hard life—and he was thoroughly alarmed about himself.

"Of course I shall pay you off if you wish it."'

* * * * *

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> 'I approached him with extended hand. His eyes, not looking at me, had a strained expression. He was like a man listening for a warning call.
>
> "Won't you shake hands, Ransome?" I said gently. He exclaimed, flushed up dusky red, gave my hand a hard wrench—and next moment, left alone in the cabin, I listened to him going up the companion stairs cautiously, step by step, in mortal fear of starting into sudden anger our common enemy it was his hard fate to carry consciously within his faithful breast.'

These things are worth many times those descriptions of sunsets, exotic seas and the last plunge of flaming wrecks which offer themselves to the compilers of prose anthologies.

This is at any rate to confirm the accepted notion of Conrad to this extent: that his genius was a unique and happy union of seaman and writer. If he hadn't actually been himself a British seaman by vocation he couldn't have done the Merchant Service from the inside. The cosmopolitan of French culture and French literary initiation is there in the capacity for detachment that makes the intimate knowledge uniquely conscious and articulate. We are aware of the artist by vocation, the intellectual who doubles the seaman, only when we stop to take stock of the perfection of the rendering and the subtle finish of the art.

But this fine balance, this identity, isn't always sustained. In Marlow, who (as remarked above) has a variety of uses, the detachment is separated off. As a main participant in events though, by his specific rôle as such, a detached one, he gives his technical function a dramatic status in the action, and the author a freedom of presence that, as we have seen, constitutes a temptation. Elsewhere Marlow is frankly a method of projection or presentation —one that we learn to associate with Conrad's characteristic vices and weaknesses. In *Youth*, for instance, one of the best-known of the tales, though not one of the best, he goes with the cheap insistence on the glamour, and with that tone which, here and in other places, makes one recall the formula of the early reviewer and reflect that the prose laureate of the British seaman does sometimes degenerate into a 'Kipling of the South Seas.' (And this is the point at which to note that Conrad can write shockingly

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bad magazine stuff—see the solemnly dedicated collection called *Within the Tides.*)

In *Lord Jim* Marlow is the means of presenting Jim with the appropriate externality, seen always through the question, the doubt, that is the central theme of the book. Means and effect are unobjectionable; it is a different matter from the use of Marlow elsewhere to pass off a vaguely excited incomprehension as tremendous significance. But *Lord Jim* doesn't deserve the position of pre-eminence among Conrad's works often assigned it: it is hardly one of the most considerable. There is, in fact, much to be said in support of those reviewers who (Conrad tells us) ' maintained that the work starting as a short story had got beyond the writer's control,' so that what we have is neither a very considerable novel, in spite of its 420 pages, nor one of Conrad's best short stories. The presentment of Lord Jim in the first part of the book, the account of the inquiry and of the desertion of the *Patna,* the talk with the French lieutenant—these are good Conrad. But the romance that follows, though plausibly offered as a continued exhibition of Jim's case, has no inevitability as that; nor does it develop or enrich the central interest, which consequently, eked out to provide the substance of a novel, comes to seem decidedly thin.

The eking out is done mainly from the world of *Almayer's Folly, The Outcast of the Islands,* and *Tales of Unrest,* those excessively adjectival studies in the Malayan exotic of Conrad's earliest vein. Those things, it had better be said here, though they are innocuous, and no doubt deserved for their originality of setting some respectful notice when they came out, will not be urged by judicious admirers of Conrad among his claims to classical rank. In their stylistic eloquence, which suggests a descent from Chateaubriand, their wearying exoticism, and their ' picturesque ' human interest, they aren't easy to re-read.

No, *Lord Jim* is neither the best of Conrad's novels, nor among the best of his short stories. If, on the other hand, his most considerable work had had due recognition, it would be known as one of the great novels of the language. For *Nostromo* is most certainly that. And it complicates the account of Conrad's genius in that it doesn't answer to the formula arrived at above. He is not here the laureate of the Merchant Service, the British seaman happily

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doubled with the artist—an artist whose ' outsideness ' with regard to the Merchant Service is to be constated only in the essential degree of detachment involved in an adequately recording art. In *Nostromo* Conrad is openly and triumphantly the artist by *métier*, conscious of French initiation and of fellowship in craft with Flaubert. The French element so oddly apparent in his diction and idiom throughout his career (he learnt French before English) here reveals its full significance, being associated with so serious and severe a conception of the art of fiction.

The controlling conception of the novelist's art is severe, but the novel is luxuriant in its magnificence: it is Conrad's supreme triumph in the evocation of exotic life and colour. Sulaco, standing beneath snow-clad Higuerota, with its population of Indians, mixed-bloods, Hidalgos, Italians and English engineers, is brought before us in irresistible reality, along with the picturesque and murderous public drama of a South American State. This aspect of Conrad's genius in *Nostromo* has had full recognition; indeed it could hardly be missed. What doesn't seem to be a commonplace is the way in which the whole book forms a rich and subtle but highly organized pattern. Every detail, character and incident has its significant bearing on the themes and motives of this. The magnificence referred to above addresses the senses, or the sensuous imagination; the pattern is one of moral significances.

Nostromo has a main political, or public, theme, the relation between moral idealism and ' material interests.' We see the Gould Concession become the rallying centre for all in Costaguana who desire peace and order—the constitutionalists, the patriotic idealists, the Robin Hood of the oppressed, the representatives of the financial power of Europe and North America. The ironical end of the book shows us a Sulaco in which order and ideals have triumphed, Progress forges ahead, and the all-powerful Concession has become the focus of hate for workers and the oppressed and a symbol of crushing materialism for idealists and defenders of the spirit. This public theme is presented in terms of a number of personal histories or, it might be said, private themes, each having a specific representative moral significance.

The Gould Concession is in the first place the personal history of its inheritor, Charles Gould—and the tragedy of his wife. He, like the other main characters, enacts a particular answer to the

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question that we feel working in the matter of the novel as a kind of informing and organizing principle: what do men find to live *for* —what kinds of motive force or radical attitude can give life meaning, direction, coherence? Charles Gould finds his answer in the ideal purpose he identifies with the success of the Gould Concession:

> 'What is wanted here is law, good faith, order, security. Anyone can declaim about these things, but I pin my faith to material interests. Only let the material interests once get a firm footing, and they are bound to impose the conditions on which alone they can continue to exist. That's how your money-making is justified here in the face of lawlessness and disorder. It is justified because the security which it demands must be shared with an oppressed people. A better justice will come afterwards. That's your ray of hope.'

Charles Gould's faith is parodied by his backer, the American financier Holroyd, whose interest in furthering a 'pure form of Christianity' and whose rhetorical faith in the manifest destiny of the United States cannot without irony be said to give ideal significance to his love of power. Charles himself is absorbed by the Concession that killed his father, and Emilia Gould, standing for personal relations and disinterested human sympathy, looks on in starved loneliness at the redeeming triumph that is an ironical defeat of the spirit.

Nostromo, picturesque indispensable to his patrons and popular hero, has no ideal purpose. He lives for reputation, 'to be well spoken of'—for his reflection in the eyes of others, and when, tempted by the silver, he condemns himself to clandestine courses the mainspring of his life goes slack. His return to find the new lighthouse standing on the lonely rock hard by his secret, and his consequent betrayal into devious paths in love, are magnificent and characteristic triumphs of symbolism. His appropriately melodramatic death is caused by the silver and occurs during a stealthy visit to it.

Martin Decoud, intellectual and 'dilettante in life,' Nostromo's companion in that marvellously rendered night of the Gulf (it is one of the most vivid pieces of sensuous evocation in literature), also has no ideal purpose. The voice of sceptical intelligence, with 'no

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faith in anything except the truth of his own sensations,' he enjoys conscious advantages, and has no difficulty in summing up Nostromo:

> 'Decoud, incorrigible in his scepticism, reflected, not cynically but with general satisfaction, that this man was made incorruptible by his enormous vanity, that finest form of egoism which can take on the aspect of every virtue.'

He can also place Charles Gould, that 'sentimental Englishman' who

> 'cannot exist without idealizing every simple desire or achievement. He could not believe his own motives if he did not make them first a part of some fairy tale.'

Decoud himself, contemptuously free from the 'sentimentalism of the people that will never do anything for the sake of their passionate desire, unless it comes to them clothed in the fair robes of an ideal,' is frankly moved by his passion for Antonia Avellanos, and that alone, when he initiates the step through which the mine is saved and the aims of the patriots and idealists achieved. In this respect he provides a criticism of Charles Gould's subtle infidelity to his wife. Yet, even apart from his passion, he is not quite self-sufficient. At a moment when we might have expected him to be wholly engrossed in practical considerations we find him, significantly, illustrating an essential human trait:

> 'all the objectless and necessary sincerity of one's innermost life trying to react upon the profound sympathies of another's existence.'

For

> 'In the most sceptical heart there lurks at such moments, when the chances of existence are involved, a desire to leave a correct impression of the feelings, like a light by which the action may be seen when personality is gone, gone where no light of investigation can ever reach the truth which every death takes out of the world. Therefore, instead of looking for something to eat, or trying to snatch an hour or two of sleep, Decoud was filling the pages of a large pocket book with a letter to his sister.'

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Marooned on the Great Isabel (site of the subsequent lighthouse) he discovers that his self-sufficiency is indeed radically qualified:

> ' Solitude from mere outward condition of existence becomes very swiftly a state of soul in which the affectations of irony and scepticism have no place. It takes possession of the mind, and drives forth the thought into the exile of utter unbelief. After three days of waiting for the sight of some human face, Decoud caught himself entertaining a doubt of his own individuality. It had merged into the world of cloud and water, of natural forces and forms of nature . . .
> . . . He had recognized no other virtue than intelligence and had erected passions into duties. Both his intelligence and his passion were swallowed up easily in the great unbroken solitude of waiting without faith.'

He shoots himself. The whole episode is given in painful immediacy.

Of all the characters the one nearest to self-sufficiency is Dr. Monygham the disliked and distrusted, and he, for all his sardonic scepticism about human nature, does hold to an ideal. His scepticism is based on self-contempt, for his ideal (he is, in fact, a stronger and quite unequivocal Lord Jim) is one he has offended against; it is an exacting ideal of conduct. He offers a major contrast with Nostromo too, since his success in the desperate venture that saves the situation and rehabilitates him (in his own eyes—he expects death) depends upon his having no reputation except for ' unsoundness ' and a shady past, and his being ready to be ill-spoken of and ill-thought of. His ideal, of course, isn't merely personal—it is of the same order as the moral idea of the Merchant Service (he is ' an officer and a gentleman '): it owes its strength to a traditional and social sanction; and he has an outer stay in his devotion to Mrs. Gould.

Perhaps the completest antithesis to Decoud is Giorgio Viola, the serene old Garibaldino, also self-sufficient, or very near it—he by reason of his libertarian idealism, the disinterestedness of which is above all question. He represents with monumental massiveness the heroic age of the liberal faith—of *Songs before Sunrise* and the religion of humanity, and so provides a contrasting background for

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the representatives of Progress in Costaguana politics (by the end of *Nostromo* the Marxists are on the scene). He is commandingly real; but it is part of the irony of the book that the achievements he stands for should have produced the South America we are shown.

Captain Mitchell represents the Merchant Service. He is sane and stable to the point of stupidity. His inability to realize that he, Joe Mitchell (' I am a public character, sir '), has anything to fear from a ridiculously menacing Dago whose ruffians have stolen his presentation pocket-chronometer actually cows the all-powerful Dago into restoring both chronometer and freedom:

> ' The old sailor, with all his small weaknesses and absurdities, was constitutionally incapable of entertaining for any length of time a fear of his personal safety. It was not so much firmness of soul as the lack of a certain kind of imagination—the kind whose undue development caused intense suffering to Señor Hirsch; that sort of imagination which adds the blind terror of bodily suffering and of death, envisaged as an accident to the body alone, strictly—to all the other apprehensions on which the sense of one's existence is based. Unfortunately, Captain Mitchell had not much penetration of any kind; characteristic, illuminating trifles of expression, action, or movement, escaped him completely. He was too pompously and innocently aware of his own existence to observe that of others. For instance, he could not believe that Sotillo had been really afraid of him, and this simply because it would never have entered into his head to shoot any one except in the most pressing case of self-defence. Anybody could see he was not a murdering kind of man, he reflected quite gravely.'

These traits, it will be seen, qualify him for an essential function in the presentment of the action, to which he is related in a way symbolized by his triumphant sense—a sense uninformed by any comprehension of what is going forward—of being at the centre of things, whence history is directed, as he sits, an habitué, in Mrs. Gould's drawing-room.

On the significance of the other characters there is no need to enlarge: Señor Avellanos, the liberal idealist, who dies of disappointment, and the sheets of whose *Fifty Years of Misrule* are ' fired out as wads for trabucos loaded with handfuls of type ' during

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the 'democratic' *émeute*; the fanatical Father Corbelàn; Hirsch, the embodiment of fear, and so on. Instead, a negative point had better be made by way of stressing the distinctive nature of the impressiveness of *Nostromo*. The impressiveness is not a matter of any profundity of search into human experience, or any explorative subtlety in the analysis of human behaviour. It is a matter rather of the firm and vivid concreteness with which the representative attitudes and motives are realized, and the rich economy of the pattern that plays them off against one another. To suggest, as Edward Garnett does in his introduction to *Conrad's Prefaces,* that perhaps this or that character wouldn't really have behaved just as he does in the book is misdirected criticism. The life-like convincingness of Conrad's persons (which is complete as we read, and undisturbed by properly critical reflection) doesn't entitle us to psychologize them as lives existing outside the book. I am reminded of certain remarks of T. S. Eliot's:

> 'A "living" character is not necessarily "true to life." It is a person whom we can see and hear, whether he be true or false to human nature as we know it. What the creator of character needs is not so much knowledge of motives as keen sensibility; the dramatist need not understand people, but he must be exceptionally aware of them.'

It is an Elizabethan dramatist Eliot has in front of him; and it strikes me that there is something that recalls the strength of Elizabethan drama about the art of *Nostromo*—something Shakespearean, in fact. The keen sensibility and the exceptional awareness are apparent in the vividness with which we see and hear Conrad's persons, and there is nothing about them that, on reflection, we find untrue to human nature as we know it. But the seeing and hearing is adequate understanding: they are present to us and are plainly what they are; and to try, by way of appreciation or criticism, to go behind that is to misunderstand what the book offers us. There is plainly no room in *Nostromo* for the kind of illustrated psychology that many critics think they have a right to demand of a novelist (and of Shakespeare). Consider the number of personal centres of moral interest, and the variety of themes. Consider the number of vivid dramatic scenes and episodes. Consider the different strands that go to the totality of the action. There

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is the private tragedy of the Goulds; there is Nostromo's history, involving that of the Viola family; there is the story of Decoud and Antonia; there is that of Dr. Monygham and his self-rehabilitation; and all these and so much else are subsumed in the public historical drama—the study, concretely rendered, of the play of moral and material forces, political and personal motives, in the founding of the Occidental Republic.

Clearly, Conrad's study of motive, and of the relation between the material and the spiritual, doesn't depend for its impressiveness on any sustained analytic exhibition of the inner complexities of the individual psyche. The impressiveness lies in the vivid reality of the things we are made to see and hear, and the significance they get from their relations in a highly organized and vividly realized whole. It lies in such effects as that of the presence of Decoud and Nostromo in the lighter as it drifts with its load of silver and of Fear (personified by the stowaway Hirsch) through the black night of the Gulf; and that of the unexpected nocturnal encounter between Nostromo and Dr. Monygham, two sharply contrasted consciousnesses, in the vast deserted Custom House, and their discovery that the ' shapeless high-shouldered shadow of somebody standing still, with lowered head,' seen on the wall through a doorway, is thrown by the hanging body of the tortured Hirsch. We have it characteristically when Charles Gould, going out from his interview (consummate satiric comedy) with Pedrito Montero, would-be Duc de Morny to the new Napoleon, runs into the ' constitutionalist ' deputation he has refused to support (' The acceptance of accomplished facts may save yet the precious vestiges of parliamentary institutions '):

> ' Charles Gould on going out passed his hand over his forehead as if to disperse the mists of an oppressive dream, whose grotesque extravagance leaves behind a subtle sense of bodily danger and intellectual decay. In the passages and on the staircases of the old palace Montero's troopers lounged about insolently, smoking and making way for no one; the clanking of sabres and spurs resounded all over the building. Three silent groups of civilians in severe black waited in the main gallery, formal and helpless; a little huddled up, each keeping apart from the others, as if in the exercise of a public duty they had been

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overcome by a desire to shun the notice of every eye. These were the deputations waiting for their audience. The one from the Provincial Assembly, more restless and uneasy in its corporate expression, was overtopped by the big face of Don Juste Lopez, soft and white, with prominent eyelids and wreathed in impenetrable solemnity as if in a dense cloud. The President of the Provincial Assembly, coming bravely to save the last shred of parliamentary institutions (on the English model) averted his eyes from the Administrador of the San Tomé mine as a dignified rebuke of his little faith in that only saving principle.'

Charles Gould's quiet unyieldingness in the face of Pedrito's threats and blandishments has already invested him for the moment with a larger measure of our sympathy than he in general commands. The brush with the deputation confirms this effect, while at the same time reinforcing dramatically that pattern of political significance which has a major part in *Nostromo*—a book that was written we remind ourselves in some wonder, noting the topicality of its themes, analysis and illustrations, in the reign of Edward VII.

Again, we have the symbolic pregnancy of Conrad's dramatic method in such a representative touch as this (the context is the flight of aristocrats and adherents of ' law and order ' to the protection of the ' master of the Campo '):

> ' The emissary of Hernandez spurred his horse close up.
>
> " Has not the master of the mine any message to send the master of the Campo?"
>
> The truth of the comparison struck Charles Gould heavily. In his determined purpose he held the mine and the indomitable bandit held the Campo by the same precarious tenure. They were equals before the lawlessness of the land. It was impossible to disentangle one's activities from its debasing contacts.'

There is—the adjective proposes itself at this point—something rhetorical, in a wholly laudatory sense, about Conrad's art in *Nostromo*. One might add, by way of insisting further on the Elizabethan in it, that it has a certain robust vigour of melodrama. The melodrama, of course, is completely controlled to the pattern of moral significance. Consider, for instance, how the climax of the public drama is given us: it is a thrilling nick-of-time

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peripeteia, but it is given in retrospect through the pompous showmanship and uncomprehending importance of Captain Mitchell (' Fussy Joe '). The triumphs of the Progress he hymns are already assured and commonplace, and already (a few pages on) Dr. Monygham is asking:

> ' " Do you think that now the mine would march upon the town to save their Señor Administratdor? Do you think that?" '

He has just pronounced:

> ' " There is no peace and no rest in the development of material interests. They have their law, and their justice. But it is founded on expediency, and it is inhuman; it is without rectitude, without the continuity and the force that can be found only in a moral principle." '

This is only one instance of that subtle play of the order of presentment against the time-order which the reader finds himself admiring in the book as a whole—subtle, yet, once taken stock of, appreciated as inevitable. It is characteristic of Conrad's method, to take another instance, that we should have seen, in a prospective glimpse given us at the very opening of the book, the pitiable débâcle of the Ribierist dictatorship of ' reform ' before we are invited to contemplate the hopes and enthusiasms of its supporters at the inauguration.

It will probably be expected, after so much insistence on the moral pattern of *Nostromo,* that something will be said about the total significance. What, as the upshot of this exhibition of human motive and attitude, do we feel Conrad himself to endorse? What are his positives? It is easier to say what he rejects or criticizes. About the judgment on Decoud's scepticism we can have no doubt. And even Decoud concedes that the illusions ' those Englishmen ' live on ' somehow or other help them to get a firm hold of the substance.' To this concession we can relate the observations of the engineer-in-chief:

> ' " Upon my word, doctor, things seem to be worth nothing by what they are in themselves. I begin to believe that the only solid thing about them is the spiritual value which everyone discovers in his own form of activity— "
>
> " Bah!" interrupted the doctor.'

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The engineer has in mind Holroyd the millionaire and his preoccupation with a 'pure form of Christianity.' But although Dr. Monygham, himself devoted to a moral idea, is as such clearly not disapproved by the author, he is made to seem Quixotic, and it is difficult to feel that the ironic light in which the ' spiritual values ' discovered by the other main characters in their forms of activity are shown is less essentially dissociating than the irony focussed upon Holroyd. In fact, though Decoud is so decisively dealt with in the action, he remains at the centre of the book, in the sense that his consciousness seems to permeate it, even to dominate it. That consciousness is clearly very closely related to the author's own personal *timbre,* that which becomes representable in quotation in such characteristic sardonic touches as:

> ' They had stopped near the cage. The parrot, catching the sound of a word belonging to his vocabulary, was moved to interfere. Parrots are very human.
>
> " Viva Costaguana!" he shrieked . . .'

It is not a question of a ' philosophy '; Conrad cannot be said to have one. He is not one of those writers who clear up their fundamental attitudes for themselves in such a way that we may reasonably, in talking of them, use that portentous term. He does believe intensely, as a matter of concrete experience, in the kind of human achievement represented by the Merchant Service—tradition, discipline and moral ideal; but he has also a strong sense, not only of the frailty, but of the absurdity or unreality, in relation to the surrounding and underlying gulfs, of such achievement, a sense so strong that it often seems very close to Decoud's radical scepticism, which, in the account of those last days, is rendered with such significant power. In fact, Decoud may be said to have had a considerable part in the writing of *Nostromo;* or one might say that *Nostromo* was written by a Decoud who wasn't a complacent dilettante, but was positively drawn towards those capable of ' investing their activities with spiritual value '—Monygham, Giorgio Viola, Señor Avellanos, Charles Gould.

At any rate, for all the rich variety of the interest and the tightness of the pattern, the reverberation of *Nostromo* has something hollow about it; with the colour and life there is a suggestion of a certain emptiness. And for explanation it is perhaps enough

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to point to this reflection of Mrs. Gould's:

> 'It had come into her mind that for life to be large and full, it must contain the care of the past and of the future in every passing moment of the present.'

That kind of self-sufficient day-to-day-ness of living Conrad can convey, when writing from within the Merchant Service, where clearly he has known it. We are made aware of hostile natural forces threatening his seamen with extinction, but not of metaphysical gulfs opening under life and consciousness: reality on board ship is domestic, assured and substantial. 'That feeling of life-emptiness which had made me so restless for the last few months,' says the young captain of *The Shadow-Line*, entering on his new command, 'lost its bitter plausibility, its evil influence.' For life in the Merchant Service there is no equivalent in *Nostromo* —no intimate sense conveyed of the day-to-day continuities of social living. And though we are given a confidential account of what lies behind Dr. Monygham's sardonic face, yet on the whole we see the characters from the outside, and only as they belong to the ironic pattern—figures in the futilities of a public drama, against a dwarfing background of mountain and gulf.

This kind of vision, this sense of life, corresponds, there can be no doubt, to something radical in Conrad. All his readers must have noticed how recurrent and important the theme of isolation is in his work. And they must have noticed too the close relation between the Decoud consciousness and the sympathetic hero of *Victory*, the English-speaking Swede, Axel Heyst. Heyst, 'uprooted' (his own word) and unattached, formed by a philosophically disillusioned father,

> 'in solitude and silence had been used to think clearly and sometimes even profoundly, seeing life outside the flattering delusion of everlasting hope, of conventional self-deception, of an ever-expected happiness.'

Having, in spite of himself, contracted a tie (the novel deals with his unwilling involvements and their consequences), he finds that

> 'that human being, so near and still so strange, gave him a greater sense of his own reality than he had ever known in all his life.'

F. R. LEAVIS.

[*To be concluded.*]

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NIETZSCHE

AT first sight Nietzsche is a perplexing figure. He was one of the acutest thinkers and most eloquent writers of the past century. A number of the most distinguished figures in contemporary literature—including men as sensitive and as humane as André Gide and Thomas Mann—have acknowledged their indebtedness to him. On the other hand he is remembered chiefly as the apostle of war and tyranny, as the enemy of all democracy and social reform and the advocate of what can only be described as Fascism. It would seem therefore that Nietzsche himself must have been an unusually complex and self-contradictory person, that he must have comprehended within himself hostile tendencies which he never synthesized into a unity. This happens to be true, but to disentangle the different threads, to show how far he was right and where he erred, is by no means an easy task. For the premises from which Nietzsche deduced his philosophy are those which dominate modern thinking; and if we wish to dispute Nietzsche's deductions we shall find ourselves criticizing not merely Nietzsche himself but the modern view of life. Nietzsche shows us what is logically involved in attitudes which are accepted as almost self-evident even by those who are most bitterly opposed to Nietzsche's own conclusions; he makes us aware of those basic contradictions which lie at the heart not merely of his own philosophy but of all contemporary culture.

Nietzsche's most valuable quality—the quality which makes him at his best so sane and exhilarating a moral teacher—was his craving for a classic harmony and balance. It was this craving which attracted him to the Greeks and to Goethe. The highest type of man, he declared, was the man who had organized his instinctive energies into a system and achieved a complete inner unity and self-mastery. Emotional order was the criterion by which men might be assessed. 'That your Self be in your action, as the mother is in the child: let that be *your* formula of virtue.' By contrast, most men exhibited different types of emotional disorder; they displayed that 'multiplicity and disintegration of the instincts, the want of system in their relationship,' which showed itself in 'vacillation and a lack of equilibrium.' 'Every mistake is in every sense the sequel to a degeneration of the instincts, the disintegration

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of the will. This is almost the definition of evil.' Nietzsche's most penetrating criticisms were his analyses of such types. His general formula for decadence was the inability to resist a stimulus, the result of which was that men became ' obliged to fight the instincts,' and in consequence adopted a rigid moral code and an ascetic view of life. Life became ' clear, cold, cautious, conscious, without instincts, opposed to the instincts,' and this, however necessary as a remedy for a diseased condition, ' was in itself only a disease,' and led to religious pessimism. ' The darkening of the heavens over man has always increased in proportion to the growth of man's shame *before man*.' Romanticism in general was an indication of emotional disorder, and its outcome in religious pessimism was illustrated in the careers of the two men by whom Nietzsche, in his youth, had been most influenced—Wagner and Schopenhauer. Another form of decadence was that engendered among an oppressed class, which expressed itself in what Nietzsche called ' slave morality.' The stimulus which such a class was unable to control was resentment against strength and healthiness, and its result was that those qualities were denounced as evil and that all human values became perverted.

It was Nietzsche's classicist morality which made him call himself an ' immoralist.' In reality his ' immoralism ' was not so alien to traditional, and even Christian, doctrines as appears on the surface or as Nietzsche himself imagined. His ideal was the man who had learnt how to be responsible to himself, the man who no longer required as external moral code because his morality had become an organic part of himself, so that be behaved well by instinct. To be ' *beyond* good and evil ' did not mean to ignore moral standards; it meant to have outgrown the need for them. The spirit, as he declared in *Zarathustra,* must aspire to be a child but it must begin by becoming a camel, a bearer of burdens. This condition of emotional integrity, which would characterize what Nietzsche called ' the superman,' would be achieved not when man renounced all laws but when he had become capable of giving laws to himself. Nietzsche's ' immoralism,' in fact, is analogous to the Aristotelian doctrine that the good man, the man in whom the form has become most perfectly actualized in matter, is the standard of good and evil, so that moral laws are merely descriptions of how the good man behaves. It resembles still more closely the Catholic doctrine that the sons of God are freed by grace from obedience to

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the law; Catholicism taught that mankind might ultimately achieve union with God, but its primary aim, in this life, was to restore that natural perfection which men had lost through the sin of Adam, in order that they might do good freely and by instinct.

Historically, moral codes had become necessary because man lived in society, because he had become ' encaged ' in the state. Morality, as Nietzsche declared, was ' the herd-instinct in the individual.' Without this necessary process of repression mankind would never have become civilized. By driving the instincts in upon themselves, it had made men more complex and increased their powers. It was ' on the soil of this *essentially dangerous* form of human society, the sacerdotal, that man really becomes for the first time an *interesting animal.*' Thus Nietzsche accepted social imperatives, buttressed by theological and political doctrines, as a necessary stage in the evolution of the race, but he proposed that mankind should now outgrow the need for them. The individual should cease to accept moral codes, and the beliefs which had been invented in order to validate them, as absolute and objective truths; he should instead acquire an organic self-mastery which would enable him consciously, and by his own will, to adapt his desires to the needs of society and the restrictions imposed by nature. He should cultivate a healthy scepticism, a capacity to consider anything as possible. ' Belief is always most desired, most pressingly needed, when there is a lack of will.' ' Convictions are prisons . . . Freedom from every kind of conviction *belongs* to strength.'

This process of inner growth requires that one should have the courage to retire into emotional solitude. The majority of mankind believe in absolute moral laws, and as long as one thinks in such terms, one cannot achieve any true emotional integrity. ' Never yet did truth cling to the arms of an absolute one. On account of those abrupt ones, return into thy security; only in the market-place is one assailed by Yea? or Nay?' Inner growth involves a considerable degree of egoism, though, as Nietzsche realized when he was true to his own intuitions, egoism is only a means to an end; the individual who has achieved an inner and superabundant strength gives more than he receives; it is a sign of inferiority to wish to live ' gratuitously ' The absolutism of popular thinking is particularly evident in politics; all political thinking, since it must appeal to the common denominator of the masses, is necessarily a vulgarization. ' The man who belongs to a party perforce becomes a liar.' ' That

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which is great from the standpoint of culture was always unpolitical —even anti-political.' For this reason the state, which enforces the political beliefs of majorities, is a ' cold monster,' which defiles everything which it touches. ' There, where the state *ceaseth,*' said Nietzsche, ' pray look thither, my brethren. Do ye not see it, the rainbow and the bridges of the Superman.'

This is true, but it raises problems which Nietzsche was unable to ignore but which were insoluble within the individualistic terms to which he confined himself. Individualism is only half the truth; the individual also belongs to society, and it is impossible for him to isolate himself from it successfully. He cannot immunize himself from social diseases; if he wishes to live well he is inexorably compelled to attempt to cure society as well as himself. The growth of society and the growth of the individual must accompany each other, one is impossible without the other. Nietzsche refused to face this fact, and the consequences of his refusal are very evident in his later writings.

Nietzsche the philosopher tried to ignore the misery and the mediocrity which he saw around him; but Nietzsche the man was deeply affected by the kindred emotions of pity and disgust. This self-division gave to all his utterances on this subject a strange note of hysteria. Like an ascetic preacher of hellfire he castigated his own weaknesses. ' A man loses power when he pities,' he declared. ' By means of pity the drain on our strength which suffering itself already introduces into the world is multiplied a thousand fold. Through pity, suffering itself becomes infectious; in certain circumstances it may lead to a total loss of life and energy.' ' They succeed,' he complained, ' in pushing their own misery, in fact, all misery, into the consciousness of the happy; so that the latter begin one day to be ashamed of their happiness, and perchance say to themselves when they meet, " ' It is a shame to be happy. There is too much misery.' " . . . Away with this shameful soddenness of sentiment. Preventing the sick making the healthy sick—for that is what such soddenness comes to—this ought to be our supreme object in the world—but for this it is above all essential that the healthy should remain separated from the sick.'

As Nietzsche remarked, ' a man . . . must almost have perished through it, in order to be unable to treat this matter lightly.' His constant attempt to suppress one side of his personality was perhaps one cause of his final breakdown. A few days after he had

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gone mad he was discovered tearfully embracing a horse which had been ill-treated by its driver.

The correct deduction to be drawn from this side of Nietzsche's teaching is that healthy individuals are possible only in a healthy society. Only in a society which has put an end to oppression, so that the few will no longer be attacked by pity or the many by resentment, will the individualism of Nietzsche become genuinely possible.

Why did Nietzsche refuse to adopt this conclusion? Why, on the contrary, since he could not ignore the political question, did he propose to regenerate society by the precisely opposite method? Everything that is enigmatic and reactionary in Nietzsche's teaching —all the advocacy of war and tyranny which seems so plainly pernicious and, coming from a person like Nietzsche, almost ridiculous—springs from the fact that he interpreted his classicist morality in terms of modern scientific materialism. But what is not sufficiently realized is the logical connection between that materialism and Nietzsche's deductions from it.

It is true that individuals have accepted the world of science as the only real world and at the same time have adopted ideals which ran counter to that world and led to its condemnation. Schopenhauer did so, and in our own day Bertrand Russell. But, as Nietzsche perceived, if one assumes that the material world is the only world, then it is impossible to form any judgment of value about it. ' The condemnation of life by a living creature ' can only be ' a symptom of a definite kind of life.' ' In order even to approach the problem of the value of life, a man would need to be placed outside life.' ' But ' there is nothing that could judge, measure, compare and condemn our existence, for that would mean judging, measuring, comparing and condemning the whole. *But there is nothing outside the whole.*' If the world, judged by human ideals, appears to be evil, it follows that human ideals must be changed. ' One must learn to compromise and arrange with that which was and is.' For Nietzsche, therefore, the highest virtue was to accept one's destiny, to rejoice in the world as it actually was without wishing it to be different, to be a ' yea-sayer.' And he found a kind of symbolical, almost mythical, expression for this attitude in his doctrine of eternal recurrence. He claimed that this doctrine was scientifically defensible, and indeed, if modern physics and biology are accepted. there is nothing intrinsically

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improbable about it.[1] But the chief value of the doctrine was moral. To believe that men would be born again and repeat the same actions an infinite number of times would mean 'to stamp the impress of eternity upon our lives.' 'This life,' declared Nietzsche, 'is thy eternal life.' 'Live so that thou mayest desire to live again.' Ask of each deed: 'Is this such a deed as I am prepared to perform an incalculable number of times?' The highest type of man was 'the most world-approving, exuberant and vivacious man, who . . . wished to have it again as it was and is, for all eternity, insatiably calling out *da capo* not only to himself but to the whole piece and play.'

The essence of scientific materialism as it was interpreted by Nietzsche (he seems not so much to have adopted nineteenth-century physics as to have anticipated modern physics) was that substance was a meaningless conception; the universe consisted merely of different lines of energy, whose movements and relationships were the sole realities. 'There is no "being" behind doing, working, becoming,' he declared; '"the doer" is a mere appanage of the action. The action is everything . . . Our whole science is still . . . a dupe of the tricks of language, and has never succeeded in getting rid of that superstitious changeling "the subject" (the atom, to give another instance, is such a changeling, just as the Kantian "Thing-in-itself").' 'Everything,' he declared, 'is energy, and 'all that teaching about the one, and the plenum, and the unmoved, and the sufficient, and the imperishable' had become nonsensical. Such a cosmology, accepted not merely as true in terms of its own postulates but also as the whole truth, implies that man is a kind of matter, that he consists of a bundle of certain kinds of energy, and that all his actions are predetermined. Moral and physical ideals therefore cease to have any objective meaning. The future is inevitable; whether what is inevitable is also desirable is a question which it is futile to ask and to which the answer will vary according to the particular point of view of the individual who asks it.

If man is a bundle of instincts and nothing more, then emotional order can consist only in the supremacy of one of those instincts over the others. And to Nietzsche, as he surveyed the course of man's evolution and his gradual conquest of nature, it

[1]See J. B. S. Haldane, *The Inequality of Man*, pages 167-175.

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seemed obvious that the most important of the instincts was the will to power. No other conclusion indeed was possible. This has always been a necessary deduction from mechanistic materialism, as far back as Hobbes. Nietzsche therefore attempted to interpret his classicist morality in terms of a universal will to power.

Emotional integrity, according to Nietzsche, did not mean a harmony of all the instincts; it meant the supremacy of the will to power over the other instincts. But if the other instincts were not to be co-ordinated but merely dominated, then there was no particular value in the extension of consciousness; it might, in fact, be positively harmful. Accordingly Nietzsche, who was one of the most completely conscious men who have ever lived, declared that ' we must, in sooth, seek *perfect life* there where it is least conscious.' ' Any degree of consciousness renders perfection impossible.' And if the will to power must be supreme, then the purpose of art and science must not be the extension of consciousness—with the former of human nature, with the latter of the external world—but the increase of power. Art should not be the result of ' objectivity, reflection, suspension of the will '; it should be a Dionysian outpouring, expressive of the exuberance of its creator. And what was the truth at which science aimed? Nietzsche himself, as he repeatedly declared, was governed by the desire to discover truth. ' Life as a means to knowledge—with this principle in one's heart one can not only be brave, but one can live joyfully and laugh joyfully.' And yet, when he came to consider truth in terms of the will to power, he was compelled to believe either that there was no such thing as objective truth or that, judged by its utility in increasing power, objective truth might be inferior to falsehood. In one mood he would define truth, pragmatically, as that which had proved useful in increasing human power; in another he would raise the question as to whether the truth might not be pernicious; in a third he would declare boldly that a man's power might be measured by the amount of truth which he could absorb without succumbing to pessimism. It would be useless to attempt to reconcile these statements.

These inconsistencies are obvious; but Nietzsche became involved in others even more fundamental. At times he assumed that the well-constituted man, the man who had achieved emotional integrity, was the man in whom the will to power was dominant; the evil man was the man who was weak, who had succumbed to

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pity or resentment or to the desire for pleasure. Such a distinction, however, implies a moral evaluation, and once the universe has been reduced to a complex of mechanical forces, all of them operating on the same plane, moral evaluations become meaningless. At other times, therefore, Nietzsche assumed not that the will to power *ought* to be dominant but that it *was* dominant, universally. All human ideals and activities were manifestations of the will to power, and this was as true of ' slave morality ' as it was of ' master morality.' The only distinction was that in some men the will to power was direct and explicit, in others it disguised itself as humanitarian sentiment. The real purpose of all humanitarianism was to enable the many to acquire power over the few.

Just as order within the individual meant, according to Nietzsche, the supremacy of the instinct for power; so order within society meant the supremacy of the powerful individual. And just as the evil individual was the individual in whom the other instincts did not obey the instinct for power, so the evil society was the society in which the powerful few were subordinated to the masses. All history was the history of a conflict for power between the many and the few, and all events and ideals were incidents in this conflict. Such a conception implies that civilization is valueless and indeed, since it may weaken the will to power, positively harmful. When Nietzsche came to consider the qualities which the strong individual should develop, he contradicted all that he had said about the value of the civilizing process; he spoke as though the superman was not to be *beyond* good and evil but behind them, not the fruit of an evolutionary process but a throwback to barbarism. And why, one asks, should he have considered one form of the will to power as better than the other? Why should the victory of the strong individual be preferred to the victory of the masses? In terms of a naturalistic metaphysic inevitability and objective desirability become identified. If strength is better than weakness, it must be because natural processes favour the strong. But this, we find to our astonishment, was not at all Nietzsche's conclusion. ' Selection ' he declared, ' is never in favour of the exception and of the lucky cases; the strongest and happiest natures are weak when they are confronted with a majority ruled by organized gregarious instincts and the fear which possesses the weak . . . Strange as it may seem, the strong always have to be

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upheld against the weak; and the well-constituted against the ill-constituted, the healthy against the sick and physiologically botched. If we drew our morals from reality, they would read thus: the mediocre are more valuable than the exceptional natures, and the decadent than the mediocre.' ' I protest against this formulating of reality into a moral.'

Thus Nietzsche, in spite of all his insistence that the world of nature was the only real world, and that to deny nature was a form of degeneration, was driven to admit that he did not draw his morals from reality. When then did he draw them? He had a prejudice in favour of the strong individual, and he insisted that this prejudice was objectively valid. But why a personal prejudice should have any such objective validity was something which he never explained.

Nietzsche's applications of this doctrine were equally extraordinary. Having identified the well-constituted individual with the powerful individual, he went on to argue that the powerful individual should make himself the master of society. He should be wholly egoistical, regarding the masses as worthy only to sacrifice themselves for his sake. Above all he should never give way to pity; to allow his will to power to be weakened by pity for the masses was the worst of crimes. Anything which diminished the power of the few was evil; anything which strengthened it was good, even though this strengthening might involve the capacity to inflict suffering, the love of war and violence for their own sake. 'The sight of suffering does one good, the infliction of suffering does more good,' he declared.

Nietzsche's self-identification with such ' tropic monsters ' as Napoleon and Caesar Borgia would be absurd if it were not pathetic. In private life he was the most sympathetic of beings. It was himself, in a saner mood, who supplied the true refutation to his praise of cruelty. ' When we learn better to enjoy ourselves,' he said in *Zarathustra*, ' then do we unlearn best to give pain unto others.' It is important, however, to realize the cause of his error. When he declared that the individual must preserve his own emotional and intellectual integrity and must be protected from illegitimate social pressure, he was stating a truth of permanent importance. His error was that he thought in terms of power. He believed that one had to choose between the tyranny of the few

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over the many and the tyranny of the many over the few. Such a dilemma, whichever way one prefers to decide it, is necessarily involved in a purely naturalistic view of life.

What is lacking in Nietzsche's philosophy—the missing corner-stone which would have enabled him to reconcile his classicist morality with a tenable political program—may be summarized in one word—the word development.' It was because Nietzsche denied the possibility of any true development that he identified order, both in the individual and in society, with the dominance of the will to power.

Development consists in the synthesizing into a higher unity of forces which have hitherto conflicted with each other. Such a higher unity cannot be wholly explained in terms of its component parts. Something new comes into existence; quantitative changes become qualitative, and when these changes occur, mechanical notions of cause and effect are no longer applicable.

Human nature is more than a bundle of instinctive energies; it is also a formative principle which combines those energies into a harmonious whole. This formative principle is active in the flux of change, but it is not itself merely a part of the flux; man may have developed out of matter, but he cannot be reduced to terms of matter. It would, in fact, be erroneous to describe this formative principle as a form of energy, to identify it with what is called 'the will,' for its functions are chiefly negative; it operates by checking and controlling the instincts, by bringing them into communication with each other and adapting them to the necessities imposed by man's environment, and it does so through the extension and intensification of consciousness. All growth within the individual means a growth in consciousness; individual freedom means conscious self-mastery. The difference between man's organic nature and the instinctive energies which it synthesizes is what gives meaning to moral ideals.

Similarly, within society, progress means the harmonizing of the energies of different individuals; and just as the true purpose of individual development is not to repress the instincts but enable each of them to find its proper satisfaction, so the true purpose of social development is not to enslave individuals but to enable each of them to fulfil themselves.

H. B. PARKES.

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A CRITICAL THEORY OF JANE AUSTEN'S WRITINGS

IT is common to speak of Jane Austen's novels as a miracle; the accepted attitude to them is conveniently summarised by Professor Caroline Spurgeon in her address on Jane Austen to the British Academy:

> 'But Jane Austen is more than a classic; she is also one of the little company whose work is of the nature of a miracle . . . That is to say, there is nothing whatever in the surroundings of these particular writers [Keats, Chatterton, Jane Austen, Emily Brontë], their upbringing, opportunities or training, to account for the quality of their literary work.'

The business of literary criticism is surely not to say 'Inspiration' and fall down and worship, and in the case of Jane Austen it is certainly not entitled to take up such an unprofitable attitude. For in Jane Austen literary criticism has, I believe, a uniquely documented case of the origin and development of artistic expression, and an enquiry into the nature of her genius and the process by which it developed can go very far indeed on sure ground. Thanks to Dr. Chapman's labours we have for some time had at our disposal a properly edited text of nearly all her surviving writings, and scholarship, in his person chiefly, has brilliantly made out a number of interesting facts which have not yet however been translated into the language of literary criticism.

Correlated with Professor Spurgeon's attitude to the Austen novels is the classical account of their author as a certain kind of novelist, one who wrote her best at the age of twenty (Professor Oliver Elton), whose work 'shows no development' (Professor Garrod), whose novels 'make exceptionally peaceful reading' (A. C. Bradley); one scholar writes of her primness, another of her 'sunny temper,' with equal infelicity, and all apologize for her inability to dwell on guilt and misery, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. This account assumes among other things that the novels were written in 'two distinct groups, separated by a considerable interval of time . . . thus, to put it roughly, the

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first group of three were written between the ages of twenty and twenty-two, and the second group between the ages of thirty-five and forty '[1] and only notices revision where internal dating makes it inevitable—*e.g.*, the mention of Belinda (published 1801) in *Northanger Abbey*, or of Scott as a popular poet in *Sense and Sensibility* (which indicates a revision in 1809). As long ago as 1922 Dr. Chapman pointed out[2]—but cautiously, as becomes a scholar, and with a distinct refusal to commit himself to any positive deductions—that ' the chronology of Miss Austen's novels is unusually obscure ' and that for ' the great part of this assumption there is little warrant.' But we can go much farther than this. There are besides the six novels three volumes of early work in manuscript, of which two have been published, and drafts and miscellaneous pieces at various stages, as well as the two volumes of correspondence, which taken together offer the literary detective as well as the literary critic a harvest of clues and evidence; and these writings cover her life from the age of fifteen to her death. Cassandra Austen, besides her notorious work in censoring those of her sister's letters which she did not destroy, left a memorandum of the dates of composition of some of her sister's work; other evidence exists in Jane's *Letters*,[3] and the manuscripts generally tell their own story. Moreover she had a habit of constructing her novels on the current calendar for her own convenience. From these data we can make out the following table of Miss Austen's working life:

JANE AUSTEN, 1775-1817.

Between 1789 and 1793 she turned out for the amusement of her family a mass of satiric work (some dramatic and some in epistolary form), some unfinished stories, and many type epistles. From these she selected a number for preservation by copying them at intervals (to judge by the handwriting, over some years) into three volumes. Of these three, *Volume the First* has been edited and published by Dr. Chapman; *Volume the Second* has been published under the title of one of its pieces, *Love and Freindship;* while the third volume has unfortunately never been printed,

[1] A. C. Bradley, address to the English Association.
[2] *Times Literary Supplement*, Feb. 9th, 1922.
[3] Edited R. W. Chapman.

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though a sufficient description of it can be found in the ***Life and Letters*** published by W. and R. A. Austen-Leigh.

1795 *ca.* ***Elinor and Marianne*** was written as a novel in letter-form.

1796-7. ***First Impressions*** written, as a novel in letter-form.

1797. ***Elinor and Marianne*** was rewritten as ***Sense and Sensibility;*** the ***Memoir*** says ' in its present form ' which means only that it was no longer in letters; in some respects at least it could not have been the novel that we know.

1797-8. ***Susan,*** a novel, probably written up from an unfinished story in ***Volume the Third*** called ' Catharine, or the Bower.'

1803. ***Susan*** was re-written and sent to a publisher.

Before 1805, probably in the interval between the two versions of ***Susan, Lady Susan,*** an epistolary ***nouvelle,*** was written. It is untitled; its paper is water-marked 1805, but what we have is ' not a draft but a fair copy ' and judging by Jane Austen's habits of composition we can assume that this is a rewrite after a period of years.

Between 1806 and 1807 a new novel, ***The Watsons,*** was started; we have a fair copy corrected, but not finished. Calendar evidence shows it was located in 1807.

1808-9. ***Lady Susan,*** on my theory, was expanded into ***Mansfield Park*** (the 1808-9 calendar was used to construct ***Mansfield Park***).

1809. ***Susan*** probably revised again.

1809-10. ***Sense and Sensibility*** rewritten or revised, for publication in 1811.

1810-12. ***Pride and Prejudice*** was rewritten for publication in 1813, radically beyond all doubt since it is built on the punctilious observance of the 1811-1812 calendar.

1811-1813. ***Mansfield Park*** rewritten as we know it for publication in 1814. Since she spent so long over it, the alterations were probably considerable, and I suspect the 1808-9 version to have been epistolary.

1814-1815. ***Emma*** written up for publication in 1816 from the earlier story ***The Watsons*** (as I hope to show).

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1815-1816. *The Elliots* written, but not I believe intended for publication as it stands; two of the last chapters towards the final version were completely rewritten, and we have the rejected chapter to compare. The prototype, which exists for every other novel, could hardly have not existed for this work, and as the author's hands were full from 1806 onwards, it can possibly be allotted to the pre-1806 gap. Other reasons can be adduced in support of my theory.

1816-17. *Susan* was revised for publication as *Catherine;* it was published posthumously as *Northanger Abbey,* with *The Elliots* as *Persuasion,* by Henry Austen, who gave both these books the names we know them by.

Jan.-March, 1817. *Sanditon,* a new novel of which she was writing the first draft when she died. The MS. remains for us to see what a first draft of hers looked like.

We can see from this table of what Jane Austen chose to preserve of her work and the records, accidentally preserved, of what she preferred to destroy, that our author wrote unceasingly (we should be unjustified in assuming that nothing was being written in the one period, 1798-1803, for which we happen to have no evidence). She had, it appears, some very peculiar habits of composition, which quite destroy the popular notion of her writing by direct inspiration as it were. One habit was to lay down several keels in succession and then do something to each in turn, never having less than three on the stocks but always working at any one over a period of years before launching it, and allowing twelve clear months at least for each final reworking. Another was to start writing her novels much further back in conception than most novelists or perhaps than any other novelist; what is usually a process of rapid and largely unconscious mental selecting, rejecting and reconstituting, was in her case a matter of thoroughly conscious, laborious, separate draftings; in every case except that of *Persuasion* we know, or I hope to show that we know, of early versions which bear little resemblance to the novels as published. Indeed, I propose to argue that her novels are geological structures, the earliest layer going back to her earliest writings, with subsequent accretions from her reading, her personal life and those lives most closely connected with hers, all recast—and this is what

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gives them their coherence and artistic significance—under the pressure of deep disturbances in her own emotional life at a given time.

This at least is clear, that Miss Austen was not an inspired amateur who had scribbled in childhood and then lightly tossed off masterpieces between callers; she was a steady professional writer who had to put in many years of thought and labour to achieve each novel, and she took her novels very seriously. Her methods were in fact so laborious that it is no wonder that she only produced six novels in twenty-seven years, and the last of those not finally revised, while another (*Northanger Abbey*) was so immature that she despaired of doing anything with it. Another point that emerges is that she was decidedly not precociously mature as an artist. There is no reason whatever to suppose that *Pride and Prejudice, Sense and Sensibility,* and *Northanger Abbey* as we know them agreed in form, tone, content or intention, with those versions which were offered earlier to publishers who (not unnaturally) did not care to publish them. In their original form they were no doubt as thin and flat as *The Watsons,* as sketchy as *Sanditon,* as unsympathetic as *Lady Susan,* and as much dependent for the most part on family jokes as *Northanger Abbey* still is. The novels as we know them are palimpsests through whose surface portions of earlier versions, or of other and earlier compositions quite unrelated, constantly protrude, so that we read from place to place at different levels. Two of the novels, *Emma* and *Mansfield Park,* are the results of an evolutionary process of composition, and bristle with vestigial traits. The novels as a whole then cannot be said to be the work of any given date, but the published versions are certainly to be ascribed to Jane Austen at the final date of revision, since before such final revisions they would probably have been unrecognizable to us now. Thus *Pride and Prejudice* was not the work of a girl of twenty-one but of a woman aged thirty-five to thirty-seven, and we have actually nothing as it was written besides the juvenilia till *Lady Susan,* a slight but accomplished piece of writing in her thirtieth year, and *The Watsons,* a thin sketch for a later novel, written when she was two years older. Since it is not until *Emma,* written when she was nearly forty, that she brings off a mature and artistically perfect novel, in which the various elements are for the first time integrated, we are justified in concluding that she was artistically a late developer as well as a slow and laborious writer.

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The wit similarly has a pedigree, so have the characters and much of the plots, and even the details of the intrigue. Much more in the novels is dependent on reference to, reaction against, and borrowings from, other novelists than is commonly realized, I believe. *Northanger Abbey* is generally held to be a ' sport,' in its relation to the Gothic novels, but several of her novels were largely, and the others partially, conceived in a similar manner and are as little to be appreciated without at least as much realization of what they are tilting against or referring to. Far from the Austen novels having fallen straight from heaven into the publisher's lap, so to speak, they can be accounted for in even greater detail than other literary compositions, for Jane Austen was not a fertile writer. Her invention except in one limited respect was very meagre; casual jottings of aspects of ' character ' and bits of situation and stage business made in her teens turn up at intervals to be worked into the shape required by the story in hand; a great deal of what seems to be creation can be traced through her surviving letters to have originated in life; much of her novels consists of manipulation and differentiation of characters and group-relations made long before in cruder and more general or merely burlesque pieces of writing; rarely is anything abandoned, however slight, Jane Austen's practice being rather thriftily to ' make over.' Her inspiration then turns out to be, as Inspiration so often does, a matter of hard work—radical revision in the light of a maturer taste and a severe self-criticism, and under the pressure of a more and more clearly defined intention over a space of years. Her invention consists chiefly in translating the general into the particular; she proceeds from the crude comprehensive outline and the dashing sketch to something subtle and specialized by splitting up and separating out—in fact her tendency is to overdo this process, so that in the end Mrs. Norris and Elizabeth Elliot and Miss Bingley and Lady Catherine are each too much on one note, rather monotonous and over-attenuated, whereas the original piece of characterization in the void from which they all derive, Lady Greville in the second MS. volume, is more robust in possessing all these facets—she abounds in all these forms of feminine ill-nature instead of exhibiting only the one eternally, and is better comedy because she has no such tendency to get on the reader's nerves. But these later inventions were intended to get on the reader's nerves because they were aspects of social intercourse that had got on Miss Austen's.

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I will take one illustration, a particularly neat one, of a process common in her work, from the second MS. volume (which like the first is of the greatest interest to the literary critic). In ' A Collection of Letters ' Letter the Third, the only one which is not burlesque, is an account by ' a young lady in reduced circumstances ' of a couple of encounters with the local great lady who first takes her to a ball and then calls next day to invite her to dinner. This letter is probably the best-known piece of Austen ' juvenilia ' and it has been noticed by one or two critics that Lady Catherine de Bourgh is descended from Lady Greville and that the incident of Charlotte Collins being called out to the carriage in all that wind is also reproduced from this Letter. But anyone who will turn it up in the *Love and Freindship* volume, however sceptically, will have to admit that it indisputably contains all the following:

1. Lady Catherine's general line of impertinence to Elizabeth and some incidents slightly improved in *Pride and Prejudice*.
2. Mrs. Norris's scolding Fanny when she is going out to dine with the Grants—the business about the carriage and walking in spite of the possible rain and the necessity of knowing her place are all there, with just the same tone of voice.
3. The ball itself produces two balls later on, the one in *Pride and Prejudice* where Miss Bingley is rude to Eliza and the one in *Northanger Abbey* where the situation of being engaged to a partner who turns up at the last minute when the heroine is embarrassed at seeming to have no partner, is here first set down. [And this last is borrowed from *Evelina*.]
4. The incident of Miss de Bourgh stopping her carriage, sending for Charlotte to come out in all that wind, ' abominably rude,' etc.
5. The conversation between the Bingley sisters on Eliza's indelicacy in taking a cross-country walk is clearly anticipated in Lady Greville's remarks to the letter-writer in similar phrases.
6. The characters of Lady Catherine and Mrs. Norris are unmistakably delineated in Lady Greville, just as the sensitive and down-trodden Maria Williams who writes the Letter, with the humble mother, is the original of Fanny Price.

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To see however how such jottings are used item 2 should be placed beside the relevant passage in *Mansfield Park*. The idea has not been merely polished or written up or expanded, it has been worked into an elaborate complex of characters, motives, plot and so on, so that it is part of the living tissue of the novel and is given power to move us by all that is behind it and embodied in it. It comes at the turning-point in Fanny's history when she ceases to be in the general esteem what Mrs. Norris has always represented her and becomes thenceforward a person with a position of her own (Mr. Crawford is to fall in love with her at the dinner). Sir Thomas's ordering of the carriage that Mrs. Norris (like Lady Greville) has made a point of denying her with evident malice, is not only employed to affect Fanny deeply as a mark of his consideration and exhibit both Mrs. Norris and Sir Thomas characteristically, though it is meant to do all this by the way; the carriage incident in *Mansfield Park*, unlike the similar incident in the Letter, where it remains a piece of mere ill-natured rudeness, is a symbol of Fanny's changing status and a critical, indeed a pivotal point in the plot. What was originally simple satiric humour, a piece of external and isolated observation magnified to the proportions of farce, has been fused into a work of art. It is this power of seizing on every trifle at her command, whether drawn from nature or literature (as we shall see, they were of about equal authority for her) and making it serve a complex purpose, using it in the one place and context where it will tell and do exactly what is required of it—it is this kind of ability that constitutes her genius, rather than any more mysterious and inexplicable quality.

* * * * *

The large Austen family, well-born, but not well off, well-educated, singularly united, with tentacles of kinsfolk reaching out into great houses, parsonages rich and poor, Bath and London, the navy and the militia, with its theatricals, dances, flirtations, marriages and invalids was a rich source of raw material for any novelist, but it contributed in two less obvious respects to Jane's equipment. One was that in her capacity of constant visitor to outlying branches she necessarily wrote letters home, addressed it is true to Cassandra, but evidently meant, as Dr. Chapman notes, to be read aloud to a group, keeping them in touch with their friends

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and relatives; similarly, when at home she wrote to friends, nieces and nephews to transmit family news and give advice. In these letters we can not only find much that later went into the novels, but we can see that material in a preliminary stage, half-way between life and art. The character-sketches, the notes on conduct and social functions, were written for an audience, and written also from a point of view that is the novelist's. There is unfortunately no room here to enlarge on this interesting relation of the letters to the novels, but I will summarize my argument by saying simply that without the letter-writing one of the conditions essential to the production of the novels would not have existed; the letter-writing, like the drafting of story into novel at different stages of composition, was part of the process that made possible the unique Austen novels.

The other service this family unit rendered the future novelist was in providing a literary springboard in its reactions to novels, which the Austens consumed largely but in no uncritical spirit. In addition to acting among themselves (these amateur theatricals have left of course other traces beside the acting in *Mansfield Park:* a preference after epistolary for dramatic narrative, and a tendency to characterization too broad for any medium but the footlights)—in addition to acting plays the Austens by reading aloud and discussing their reading had evidently acquired by the time Jane was fifteen a common stock of conversational allusions, jokes, understandings about the absurdities of their favourite writers and certain literary criteria. The fruits of this were the contents of the three manuscript volumes—these items have mock dedications to members of the family. Some of these remain private jokes, others are jokes we can understand, while some though closely related to the rest are positive pieces of original composition. The trend of this family joke is satiric, but it implies also a habit of discussing the *theory* of novel composition and style. Jane was a sound critic of the novel before she began to be a novelist at all (among other numerous references in the letters to this subject there is a significant one to Cassandra—' I know your starched notions ' in the matter of digressions in fiction). The family joke and writing for a circle which understood her allusions gave her the habit of writing with a side-glance at her audience, which though it has in the earlier novels given us some cryptic passages is nevertheless the source of

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that intimate tone with the reader that has made her so popular. It is the recollection of such a critical audience liable to pounce that accounts also for her poise—her hold on herself (so disastrously lacking in George Eliot) which constantly evokes self-ironical touches like that in *Persuasion* where, after Anne's indulgence in the poetry of autumn melancholy, she remarks on ' the ploughs at work [that] spoke the farmer, counteracting the sweets of poetical despondence, and meaning to have spring again.'

The Austen family were hard-headed and demanded not poetry but uncompromising fidelity to nature in their fiction. There is hardly anything easier to ridicule in literature than the eighteenth-century novel by contrasting it with daily life, particularly when manners, idiom and social conventions changed as rapidly as they can be seen to have done between *Clarissa* and *Evelina,* and *Evelina* and *Pride and Prejudice.* So the MS. volumes are full of burlesques of the literary conventions, the style and the conversations of Richardson, Goldsmith, Sterne, Fanny Burney, and Henry Mackenzie among others, of the novel of sentiment, the language of sensibility and the language of morality. The value of such a start is obvious when compared with the ' sedulous ape ' recipe for training an artist of a century later: dead conventions are not propagated thus, and a study of how other novelists wrote combined with a critical perception of where such writing leads and why and how not to get there, is a tremendous help in finding where one wishes to go oneself. But the burlesque can already be seen in the MS. volumes to have a positive side. Though it is impossible here to enter on a detailed examination of *Volume the First* and *Love and Freindship* a few main strands are worth following.

There is an unconsciously very funny scene in *Evelina* (a novel the Austens seem to have known by heart) where Evelina visits her hitherto unknown father and experiences the correct emotions on the occasion, a hackneyed enough situation in eighteenth-century fiction to be satirized as a type of the false. Make the father a grandfather and multiply the grandchildren, and the burlesque does itself, as can be seen in Letter II of ' Love and Freindship.' This device is used again, as we shall see, in *Pride and Prejudice.* Many systematic attempts to prepare booby-traps for the reader and to throw cold water on his expectations are tried out in these pieces for use later in the novels. Many characters in the novels are to be

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recognized in a certain primitive form and since their origin is an important clue to the way Jane Austen conceived her novels, I will give some illustrations of what I shall call the functional origin of her characters.

The burlesque nature of the early work is visibly the source also of *Northanger Abbey*. Catherine is the anti-heroine of romance, and her family and upbringing and disposition are described entirely in anti-romantic terms. It is essential for the purposes of the joke that the book was meant to be that Catherine should be simple-minded, unsentimental and commonplace, that unsolicited she should fall in love with a young man who snubs and educates her instead of adoring her, and should be launched into the world by an anti-chaperone (for Mrs. Allen, like Catherine, is purely functional —hence her concentration on herself and her inability to advise, instruct or watch over her charge). This is generally admitted. But *Pride and Prejudice* was originally the same kind of story as *Northanger Abbey* and it is ignorance of this that has led the critics to debate problems such as whether Darcy is, like Mrs. Jennings, an instance of the artist's having changed her mind about the character, whether Elizabeth Bennet is open to the charge of pertness, whether Mr. Collins could possibly have existed. But such problems are non-existent. Besides taking its title from the moral of *Cecilia, Pride and Prejudice* takes a great deal beside, part borrowed and part burlesqued. One of the absurdities of Cecilia is her behaviour in defeating, out of the morbid delicacy proper to Burney heroines, the hero Delvile's attempts to come to an explanation with her about his feelings and the obstacles to a union with her (like Darcy he is driven to write her a long letter); it is necessary in her rôle of an anti-Cecilia that Elizabeth should be vigorous-minded, should challenge decorum by her conversation and habits, and eventually invite her lover's proposal; she is ' pert ' and of a coming-on disposition, just as necessarily as Catherine is green and dense. Darcy is only Delvile with the minimum of inside necessary to make plausible his conduct (predetermined by the object of the novel). For the original conception of *First Impressions* was undoubtedly to re-write the story of Cecilia in realistic terms, just as *Susan* or *Catherine* was both to show up *Udolpho* and *The Romance of the Forest* and to contrast the romantic heroine's entry into the world *(Evelina)* with the everyday equivalent. What would be the reactions of a

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real girl if, like Cecilia, she was appealed to by her lover's family not to marry him because she was an unsuitable match? In *Cecilia* the hero's mother, a 'noble' aristocratic figure, intended to be impressive, attacks Cecilia with all the appeals of which Lady Catherine's arguments to Elizabeth are a close but comic version (and succeeds in her appeal to Cecilia's higher nature!) Now the character of the intolerable great lady was fished out of Letter the Third in the second MS. volume, as I have noted earlier; by putting her into the high-minded Mrs. Delvile's place, changing mother for aunt (the old trick of substituting grandfather for father in burlesque), and suppressing the plausible objections to the marriage which existed in the original (the terms of a will which binds the heiress Cecilia), the *moral* situation is exquisitely burlesqued and the incredibly unrealistic tone of *Cecilia* brought down with a jolt to the level of stage-comedy. Mr. Collins is invented in functional terms for the same purpose; his lengthy proposal is devised to give the author's views on Fanny Burney's preposterous conventions about female behaviour (exhibited by both Evelina and Cecilia)—' the usual practice of elegant females '—and the stilted, grotesquely Johnsonian, diction of Burney lovers (funnier because the professions in Mr. Collins's case are bogus). And the disapproval of Bingley's sisters as a possible bar to his marrying Jane that is put forward by Jane for ridicule by Elizabeth, is also part of the anti-*Cecilia* intention: the Bingley sisters underline the Lady Catherine-Mrs. Delvile skit. The Austens certainly grasped all this, but unless we realize it too, and a whole order of such literary allusions in the novels, we cannot respond to the novels adequately.

A few more of the sources of *Pride and Prejudice* may be noted here. Mary Bennet, who like Mr. Collins has been objected to on the grounds of impossibility, is also a machine for burlesque. She is to be found in isolation in a letter in the second MS. volume called ' The Female Philosopher,' a mock portrait of ' the sensible, the amiable Julia ' who ' utters sentiments of Morality worthy of a heart like her own.' A specimen of her utterances:

> ' Mr. Millar observed (and very justly too) that many events had befallen each during that interval of time, which gave occasion to the lovely Julia for making most sensible reflections on the many changes in their situation which so long a period had

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occasioned, on the advantages of some and the disadvantages of others. From this subject she made a short digression to the instability of human pleasures and the uncertainty of their duration, which led her to observe that all earthly Joys must be imperfect . . .'

On the other hand, there are many positive borrowings from Fanny Burney not in the least in a spirit of satire. The conversation overheard, at the ball where Darcy first appears, by Elizabeth's friend, when Darcy speaks slightingly of Elizabeth, is lifted from *Evelina,* where Evelina's friend overhears the hero speak similarly of Evelina at the ball at which they first meet. Mrs. Bennet in her rôle of embarrassing her superior offspring by her vulgar and insensitive conversation, particularly on the subject of matches, is Mrs. Belfield in *Cecilia.* Elizabeth's twitting of Lady Catherine both at Hunsford and at Longbourn is an echo of the lively impertinence of the Delvile's neice, a Lady Honoria, whose cool wit at the expense of Mr. and Mrs. Delvile's convictions of superiority (his on grounds of family dignity, hers on the score of highmindedness) is quite as amusing and cleverly managed, and rather freer in scope.

But in another function Mrs. Bennet was taken from the first MS. volume. When *Pride and Prejudice* was expanded from an anti-*Cecilia* its theme developed from a contrast between sentimental and intuitive human behaviour in a given situation, to a general examination of a subject to which Jane Austen was certainly giving much thought at this time, the subject of marriage. We can always see where Miss Austen's interests and preoccupations lie in any novel by observing where the stress falls and where the deepest current of feeling flows. The conversations between Jane and Elizabeth about Charlotte's engagements to Mr. Collins, about the disparity between the sexes in courtship and about the sisters' different outlooks on life, and between Elizabeth and Charlotte and Elizabeth and Mrs. Gardiner about marriage and courtship, are noticed by every reader, I suppose, as differing in tone from the rest of the novel. The obverse to the marriage of love in the face of family disapprobation is the marriage of convenience that is approved by worldly wisdom. This idea is used again later in *Mansfield Park* and in *Persuasion,* but it is not new in Jane Austen's writings even

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in *Pride and Prejudice*. Charlotte Lucas's situation, Mr. Collins's, and his visit with unspecified matrimonial intent to Longbourn, had already been plotted out in an early story in the first MS. volume. This story in letter form is called ' The Three Sisters.'

The situation therein of the mother in the country with £500 a year and three daughters to marry was used later for *Sense and Sensibility*, but the action of the story is that of the Collins-Bennet-Lucas intrigue. Mr. Watts, a desirable *parti* but disagreeable and ridiculous, proposes like Mr. Collins to ally himself with this family, the individual wife being a matter of indifference, and similarly applies first to the eldest daughter, Mary. None of the girls wishes to marry him, but the eldest is anxious to be married and is eventually persuaded by the other two (the second sister is the candid Jane Bennet, the youngest the lively and determined Elizabeth) to accept him for his establishment and from jealous fear that one of her sisters will if she won't. Mary's mamma, like Elizabeth's, engages in battle with her daughters, declaring ' If Mary won't have him Sophy must, and if Sophy won't Georgiana *shall*.' Like Mrs. Bennet's, ' my Mother's resolution I am sorry to say is generally more strictly kept than rationally formed.' [Mrs. Bennet's nerves and silliness, however, were a later inspiration.] More interesting still, there is a half-serious discussion between the younger sisters like that between Jane and Elizabeth where Jane argues that Charlotte has a reasonable propect of matrimonial happiness, and there is a primitive account of the case for and against a marriage of convenience. But Charlotte Lucas is not Mary Stanhope in disposition (*her* character is used up many years later as Mary Musgrove); though her situation is taken from ' The Three Sisters,' her character comes from another early story, ' Lesley Castle ' in the second MS. volume. This original Charlotte (a family joke from *The Sorrows of Werther*) is another functional character, designed solely to set off by excessive insensibility the conventional delicacy of feeling of her sister Eloisa the heroine (the contrasted pair provide the Elinor-Marianne relation later). Charlotte Lutterell is wholly taken up with cookery and domestic management (vestigial traits in Charlotte Lucas), the point of this being that when her sister's betrothed dies suddenly she is distressed by the waste of wedding-victuals but doesn't understand her sister's sufferings. She has for similar reasons excessively prosaic (though

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disinterested) views on marriage that naturally acquire an ugly cast when as Charlotte Lucas she puts her views into practice. Colonel Fitzwilliam, who has no necessary part in the plot, was obviously put in to illustrate the theme, and shows signs of having been written down in the final version; his relation to Elizabeth, like that of Wickham and Lydia, Darcy and Elizabeth, Jane and Bingley, Mr. Collins and Charlotte Lucas, and the marriages of convenience desired by their families between Georgiana and Bingley and between Darcy and Miss de Bourgh, are all illustrations of the theme of the book. What we have in *Pride and Prejudice* then is not simply a subject taken over for ridicule, or a realistic instead of a conventional treatment of a plot, nor is it the simple 'borrowing' for a slightly different purpose that is the only recognition its relation to *Cecilia* has received by Dr. Chapman and other scholars. It is the central idea of *Cecilia* given an elaborate orchestration as it were, sometimes guyed (when Lady Catherine and Miss Bingley stand for the dignfied opposition of Delvile's family to his attachment), more often used as an opportunity for self-exploration on the author's part (Elizabeth's outbreak about Charlotte's marriage and her discussion of ' candour ' with her sister are spots where the crust of objective comedy visibly cracks). But what I wish to stress here is the ways in which the author has secured her materials for constructing a novel which has delighted so many readers, from the severest critics to the least critical. Her writing and reading and living up to the point of the final revision of *Pride and Prejudice* have all tended towards its creation, we might say, and the phases it passed through were necessary to its development into a serious work of art. Many times as much might be written in illustration if there were space, and similar accounts might be given of the other novels. But I have room here only for a short survey of the evolution of two other novels whose origins have been even less realized and which tell an even more interesting story of how miracles in literature are brought about.

* * * * *

It is not surprising that most of the few intelligent critical remarks that have been made about the Austen novels have proceded from novelists. Mrs. Woolf in *The Common Reader* looks with a novelist's eye at *The Watsons* and notes ' the bareness of the first chapters prove that she was one of those writers who lay out

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their facts rather baldly in the first version . . . Hence we perceive she was no conjuror after all,' and remarks ' what suppressions and insertions and artful devices ' would have been necessary to convert such a version into ' the miracle ' of a finished novel of hers. We can as it happens study the conjuring in this very case because *The Watsons* became *Emma* by processes that I think can be traced.

The story of *The Watsons* is partly written only, but it was not unfinished, it was only not copied out to the end; a tradition of the rest remained in the Austen family and has been made known. Mr. Watson, a poor country clergyman, a widower and an invalid, has a family of two sons and four daughters. One son is a surgeon, the other, Robert, is an attorney in Croydon with a wife Jane and a child Augusta. The daughters are: Elizabeth, a sympathetic old maid, Penelope and Margaret, two unpleasant husband-hunters, and the heroine Emma who has returned home at the opening of the story after being brought up from childhood by an aunt, with expectations of being an heiress, which are now at an end owing to the aunt's remarriage. Emma goes to the assembly ball with the Edwards family and there, by her kindness in offering to dance with a little boy whose promised partner, Miss Osborne, throws him over, she gets acquainted with his uncle Mr. Howard (a middle-aged cleric) and the rest of the Osborne Castle party. Returning home, Emma has to meet a family party from Croydon, returning with Margaret. During their visit the local lady-killer, the moneyed Tom Musgrave, drops in. There is a scene where Lord Osborne with Musgrave calls on the Watsons to see Emma, at the too early dinner-hour of that humble home. The story was intended to continue with the death of Mr. Watson, Emma being thrown in consequence on the Croydon ménage to act as governess to the young Augusta, and after rejecting Lord Osborne she was to marry the mature Mr. Howard. As summarized this does not sound at all like *Emma,* but *The Watsons* reads like *Emma* nevertheless. The likeness is in two respects: the tone of the setting, which is what makes each Austen novel distinct and unique,and the details of character and intrigue.

Emma Watson is a refined and superior heroine, but her background is excessively commonplace and belittling—the details of narrow means and management in the story are those that appear in the Letters about the Steventon household and which visibly bothered or irritated the writer all along. The theory of the

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biographer in his *Memoir* is that his aunt abandoned *The Watsons* because she ' became aware of the evil of having placed her heroine too low '; this is probably true, but what she did in fact was to make a fresh start with the same materials by shaking the kaleidoscope to make a new pattern. [We have seen her doing this with her materials before, and it can be accepted as one of the means which in combination produced the miracles.] A new Emma was required who should be free from the ' low ' circumstances in her immediate person, so Emma Woodhouse becomes a *real* heiress; she is a more pronounced character—frank and decisive—to suit her altered circumstances, and as we shall see acquired this shape from life. For the same reason her relatives have to go too, but they are only removed from her home to its threshold—Highbury is Stanton, Dorking and Reigate (though Hartfield is imported to elevate Emma) and the Watson family people the Woodhouse circle. Thus Emma Watson's eldest sister the spinster Elizabeth, whose situation of old maid is discussed like Miss Bates's, with her simplicity and lack of elegance, her love of company and gossip, turns into Miss Bates (the flowering of her character from a functional one is due to fusing her rôle with the personality and conversational habits of a real Miss Milles who figures in detail in the *Letters* with the same mother as Miss Bates's). The cramped barely genteel Watson home is relegated to the side of the story and becomes the Bates's, and the petty local society of surgeon-lawyer-country-town-gentility of limited means and decided inelegance, that distinguishes *Emma* from the other novels, is first mapped in *The Watsons*—Mr. Weston being developed from Mr. Edwards with his whist club at the White Hart, for instance, his kindliness and sociality and seeking out fresh gossip. Tom Musgrave (who dates back both in name and character to the second manuscript volume) undergoes a characteristic change: to fit the new plot he becomes really easy and well-bred, instead of only aspiring to be so, while his attentions to Emma remain his aimless gallantry is given a specific purpose (to conceal an understanding and secret engagement) and he becomes in short by an inevitable process Frank Churchill, the original stigma still attached to his conduct and a suspicion of the original puppyishness and lack of nice feeling still attached to his character.

Lifting Emma into wealth and refinement required many

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changes, but another kind of change can be observed which exemplifies what I have found to be a principle of reconstruction in the Austen novels. When drafting a new story this author's tendency is to repeat characters and situations she has already used, as we can clearly see in *Sanditon*, but in her rewritten version she effaces these repetitions and covers her tracks. Thus while Emma Watson's attorney brother Robert gets a lift in the world, from Croydon to Brunswick Square and attorney to gentleman lawyer, his character, which was that of John Dashwood, is abandoned for a new one, that of Mr. John Knightley, which was composed to demonstrate part of the real argument of the new novel *Emma* and is a functional one therefore. Similarly, Emma Watson's sister Penelope who is take up with trying to marry a 'rich old Dr. Harding' is only the outline of the elder Miss Steele again (who anyway was lifted from the eldest Miss Branghton in *Evelina*), so she goes too. The assembly-ball in *The Watsons* is the first ball in *Pride and Prejudice*, and Lord Osborne is just as evidently Mr. Darcy in many particulars of character and conduct and conversation. Obviously this would not do, and the Osborne females could only echo the Bingley sisters, since Lord Osborne was to become a suitor to Emma and Lady Osborne a rival of Emma's for Mr. Howard, so the whole Osborne Castle party disappears, to the great improvement of the homogeneous atmosphere of *Emma* (Enscombe is too far away to be felt). The ball does remain, but it becomes a different ball, with all which had been used in *Pride and Prejudice* dropped out and only the one new and original incident retained—the act of generosity of one character at the ball taking pity on another who is humiliated and left partnerless. Now this change is significant and beautifully illustrates the kind of revision Jane Austen made when working up her draft to the work of art that her novel eventually became. We may regret, with some critics, the loss of Emma Watson's generosity to little Charles at the ball; but we can console ourselves by noticing, as they have not, that it is rewritten into a much more subtle act of generosity of an artistically and morally superior nature: it becomes the exactly parallel action of Mr. Knightley's delicate kindness in sinking his dislike for dancing (and Harriet) to partner her at that other ball where she is publicly slighted by Mr. Elton in a far more humiliating way than Miss Osborne had slighted little Charles. The first gesture was

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invented only to get Emma acquainted with the Osborne-Howard set, and shows only that Emma was an impulsive kind-hearted girl; the second is more significant, rich in overtones, coming as it does when the plot is getting to a critical stage (it gives Harriet the excuse for thinking Mr. Knightley means to marry her, with subsequent anguish for Emma that reveals Emma's feelings for Mr. Knightley to herself), it reveals Mr. Knightley as the moral superior of the world of the novel, and it exposes Mr. Elton's character to Emma not only as mean beyond her imagination—the incident is also an ironic comment on Emma's self-deception about Mr. Elton's character and about her design of marrying him to Harriet. This, then, like the carriage-incident in *Mansfield Park*, is the kind of creation in which Jane Austen's genius manifests itself, not a miracle of inspiration but the maturity of artistic purpose that gives significant direction to a casual piece of social behaviour and co-ordinates it with a complex series of events and shapes of character.

We can get a great deal more out of *The Watsons* yet. We have seen the novelist rejecting characters that were not new,[4] adapting others from life and from her early stock of satiric or first-hand notes, and giving prominence to fresh characterization and intrigue. The original of one of the most acclaimed characters of *Emma* is Emma Watson's sister-in-law Jane, whose over-fine clothes, 'pert and conceited' personality, 'arch sallies,' 'witty smile,' consciousness of superiority (and daughter Augusta) become with no change but that of situation Augusta Elton. The origin of Mr. Woodhouse is more interesting and illuminating. He came into being originally as a purely functional character: Mr. Watson had to be an invalid (a real one) in order to keep his daughters at home from balls and to prevent his receiving company and paying calls (so that Lord Osborne's calling at Stanton to see Emma is both an impertinence and an embarrassing event); he had to die in order that

[4]The only instance of a character being repeated in a final rewrite is Lady Bertram, who in her functional character and consequent characteristics, and even in some of her remarks, is of course the anti-chaperone Mrs. Allen. But this use was justified since the author believed that *Susan* or *Catherine* would never be publishable when she was taking *Mansfield Park* through its last revision.

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Emma might be thrown on the world, have to live with her brother, experience reverses, and refuse Lord Osborne, before happily marrying Mr. Howard. Now Mr. Woodhouse becomes a valetudinarian—by a brilliant stroke of invention from the point of view of the reader's amusement, but actually I think in obedience to an inner compulsion on the author's part that provided the theme of *Emma*, just as from being a specifically sensible and well-informed man he becomes an exasperating clog on his daughter, and his conversation drivel. He keeps his daughter at his side and himself from ordinary social life through *imaginary* invalidism; Mr. Watson's basin of gruel is elaborated as Mr. Woodhouse's character expands into extravagant fatuity (there is a certain savage heightening of his nuisance-aspect towards the end which suggests that his author enjoyed him less than her critics have done). Poor Isabella naturally follows, and there was ' a poor Honey ' of a cousin's wife with Isabella-ish characteristics at the right time (1813) and also a sister-in-law who is described in the *Letters* of the same year taking her children to Southend for the sea-bathing and then paying just such a family visit to the Austens at Godmersham as the Knightleys did to Hartfield—thoughtfully provided by life to give, as Gilbert says, artistic verisimilitude to what might otherwise have been a bald and unconvincing narrative. The *Letters* show that life was often kind in this way, and no doubt the even larger number of missing letters would show even more raw material of the novels. The genius lay not in creating but in using it.

But just as everything was rejected or disguised that was old, so nothing was wasted that was new, a thriftiness characteristic of our author. Mr. Woodhouse has to be kept alive to be a problem to his daughter, so Mrs. Churchill is introduced to do the dying that alters the course of the plot and the heroine's life, and the story of the original Emma is in fact relegated with her humble circumstances and aunt instead of sister, to a subordinate heroine, Jane Fairfax (note the vestigial vicarage in the background of her family), with her superior upbringing of wealth and education but prospects only of governessing, her confined and trying home, and her exposure to the vulgar familiarity of Augusta Elton (this last not inevitable as in the earlier story, where she was Emma's sister-in-law and later hostess, and a good deal of argument is actually

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contrived between Emma, Mr. Knightley and Mrs. Weston solely to make it plausible). The character and position of Mrs. Churchill, it may be noted, are remarkably like that of disagreeable Aunt Leigh Perrott in the *Letters*. Thus old and discrete elements were rearranged to make, after assimilation, a new close-knit pattern. One of the rearrangements, perhaps the most important in this case, is the replacing of the somewhat stock heroine (who belongs, as Professor Garrod would say contemptuously, to a land flowing with milk and water) by a faulty and in many ways unsympathetic young woman, who undergoes a steady process of chastening, while the original static heroine and her story are subordinated to contribute to this chastening; while to balance this subordinate story, both artistically and for the moral argument, another and antithetic story, that of Harriet Smith, was invented. Resuscitated rather than invented, in all probability, for though we do not happen to have the original version of this last, it bears all the marks of an early origin in anti-romance of the kind we may study in the MS. volumes and can see somewhat disguised in *Northanger Abbey, Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. The Harriet-Emma Woodhouse relation is actually taken from the early *Lady Susan*, though there both parties are sympathetic; linking that up with a burlesque was a characteristic procedure. [*Lady Susan* had just previously been finally rewritten as *Mansfield Park*, and the Harriet-Emma relation was the only feature of the early story that had not been used up.]

The reader will wish to ask, how far was all this deliberate, or rather were such processes not unconscious and therefore the result of a kind of taste, an intuition for the right touch, the right character, and not a matter of cold-blooded arrangement and readjustment such as I have suggested. No doubt the artist's sense of what coheres and is in keeping with a general desired effect accounted for much of the very last rewriting, which must have been something like the changes we can see between the rejected chapter of *Persuasion* and the version finally published, and accounted also for the *exclusions*, of material not suited to her stylization of life. But the very great difference that we find between an earlier draft of a story, and its final form, such as between *The Watsons* and *Emma*, between *Lady Susan* and *Mansfield Park* (so elaborate a change that I cannot after all even summarize it here),

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and no doubt between *First Impressions* and *Pride and Prejudice*, among others, is a proof of the deliberate change of intention which must have impelled the novelist to a radical overhauling of her materials and to evolve in consequence a new technique for reassembling them on each occasion. While we can trace very largely the origin of these materials, at different times and in widely different circumstances, in quite different relations to reality or to literature, yet we can put our fingers in each case on a particular combination of motives that at a given time in her private history caused the novelist to undertake such a labour. As Mr. Harding has suggested in his valuable essay[5] on Jane Austen, we can often sense an outbreak of irritation or nervous tension in features of the novels, but in addition I believe we can in every novel see the writer exploring her own problems by dramatizing them, or in this way giving them relief. Thus, to take the case of *Emma* whose metamorphosis we have been examining, the central figure and her problems were taken from the situation of Fanny Knight at the time the novel was recast from *The Watsons*. Fanny was left at fifteen by her mother's death the mistress of two large houses, with many younger brothers and sisters, in a position of authority and wealth that would develop the qualities of Miss Emma Woodhouse in an almost similar position, and we find her actually at the time *Emma* was undertaken corresponding privately with her aunt to ask for help. She was in the dilemma that was to be Emma Woodhouse's, of not understanding her own heart,[6] and this was probably

[5] *Scrutiny*, March, 1940.

[6] Harriet fancying herself in love (but twice over) was taken in some detail from Fanny's account of her own mistaken affair, down to stimulating her imaginary feelings. See *Letters*, Nov. 18, 1814: 'Your trying to excite your own feelings by a visit to his room amused me excessively.—The dirty Shaving Rag was exquisite! —Such a circumstance ought to be in print. Much too good to be lost.' It was not lost. It appeared in print as Harriet's piece of court-plaster and pencil-stub. Emma's fancying herself in love with Frank Churchill and then him with herself is also adapted from Fanny's confidences. That the dilemma, the heart-searchings and the self-deception should be divided in the novel between two characters is Jane Austen's characteristic process of making life fit for art.

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not the first such occasion; she was evidently a handsome, lively and charming young woman, but it would be unsound as well as unnecessary to assume that Fanny Knight also embodied Emma's peculiar kind of folly—that was the *moral* of the book, an intellectual invention, like the Pride and Prejudice, the Sense and Sensibility morals, all variations of the Reason versus Romance idea that Jane Austen never tired of (she was at it again on her death-bed in *Sanditon*). But besides the moral of the book, which is a mental concept like the motivating idea in a novel of Susan Ferrier's or Maria Edgeworth's, there is always a theme proceeding from much deeper sources of experience, which gives the Austen novels the resonance lacking in for instance Maria Edgeworth's, and often makes them in effect run counter to the ' moral.' Mr. Woodhouse's valetudinarianism is a useful symbol of the way he battens on Emma, thwarting her own healthy instinct for living; and discussions of his claims on Emma, her exaggerated belief in their validity and an exasperated picture of what yielding to parental rights means (so that we feel she *ought* to have resisted them though she is commended for not doing so), accounts for the extravagance with which Mr. Woodhouse is represented and in fact why he is thus substituted for the sensible if irritable, the conversible if unsocial, the intelligent if self-centred father of the first Emma. The Letters are full of tart accounts of family invalids who had to be borne with (Mrs. Austen herself is one of them) and Jane Austen was not the first daughter who visibly suffered from having lived too long at home with mother. The internal strains and stresses inevitable in any family, however united, and especially if a large one, are more evident in the *Letters* than the novels, but only because undisguised in the former. Another part of the theme of *Emma* is embodied, as I have mentioned, in Mr. John Knightley, whose functions are numerous but centre in his much-stressed reprehensible love of domestic privacy which refuses to admit even the reasonable claims of society. This was a standing problem in the Austen family, as we know from the biographies, where we are told that Jane was the member most conscious of the necessity for resisting the family's John Knightley tendency (of hostility to outsiders, and clannish self-sufficiency). It adds to the peripheral comedy that his dislike of going into or receiving mere society should contrast with Mr. Weston's too-hospitable ways, overflowing

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confidences and uncritical good mixing, but the contrast is conducted on too tense a note to have been contrived merely for purposes of comedy. Mr. Weston is the opposite of his creator in his social character—' she likes people too easily ' we remember of an acquaintance in the Letters, and the same criticism is made by Elizabeth Bennet of her sister Jane—and Mr. John Knightley is conscience's reply to the Austens' conviction of righteousness in being aloof and despising the undiscriminating. This, like the father-daughter relation and its solution in Emma's relation to Mr. Knightley, the moral arbiter of the book and her spiritual regulator who by becoming her husband solves her problems—this and such matters are what *Emma* is *about*. ' Ordination ' is what Miss Austen said and no doubt thought was the subject of *Mansfield Park*, but what reader would have noticed the ordination theme unless told of it, or that an important contrast is intended between Dr. Grant and Edmund Bertram as clerics, and that the arguments about ordination and the Church were meant to take stress? The reader sees only that the author's emotional capital was invested in the struggle in Mary Crawford's nature and in Fanny Price's sufferings over Edmund, and in the anti-Crawford feeling that animates the moral drama. We can answer the question: At what point in these rewritings does a novel become *the* novel? by saying with confidence that it is when the author changes her treatment so that from being outside she is to be found inside.

A similar account of the origins, alterations and ultimate purpose of each novel can I believe be given, with the additional persuasiveness that space for illustration, comparison and detailed deduction allows, and I hope to produce such an account in a forthcoming book. But before giving up this hopeless attempt to summarize in a few pages an undertaking that requires several hundred to make it coherent, I should like to give one brief illustration of the necessity for such a critical foundation as a preliminary to any profitable literary account of Jane Austen, to even the smallest and apparently most harmless kind of remarks. It will help to answer the reader's question, what is all this for?

' A woman of such sterling qualities ought surely to have had daughters more attractive than Lady Middleton and Mrs. Palmer,' one scholarly critic objects; and it is common to say with Bradley that the author ' wrote herself into a good humour with Mrs.

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Jennings.' These reveal a complete lack of understanding of the novelist's intention in composing *Sense and Sensibility* and the kind of relation to reality that her methods entail. *Sense and Sensibility* is so narrowly symmetrical in its construction, its stylization so artificial and its object so obtrusively evident that there is in the case of this novel at least no excuse for not approaching a work of art as such. Marianne is there like Emma to be chastened, and the drama leads us through her self-deceptions to her recognition of error and her repentance. Originally of course she was the peg on which to hang a literary joke, like Catherine and *Northanger Abbey,* but though the ' Sense versus Sensibility ' idea was the moral animating *Elinor and Marianne,* we can see that the superimposed novel has a theme of deeper import. Marianne has lacked ' candour,' that key-word in Miss Austen's vocabulary, and her sin has consisted in an uncandid attitude to society and a refusal to take her part as a member of society. Mrs. Jennings stands for a sample of the social average; we see her first with Marianne's distorted vision (as we first see Darcy through Elizabeth's eyes, and the whole of *Emma* through Emma's consciousness) but by the last part of the story the author has written not herself but *us* into a good humour with Mrs. Jennings; it is a triumph of her art and not a flaw in it. We have been manoeuvred round from Marianne's original viewpoint to that which makes Marianne's solemn repentance after her illness called for. Mrs. Jennings is indelicate in speech, and inelegant in manners, and unrefined in spirit, but from the time of the crisis (Marianne's finding herself deceived in Willoughby) Jane Austen contrives that the absence in Mrs. Jennings of the qualities she valued most is seen to be offset by the presence of qualities that must, if only in theory, have been at least as much recommendation to her even when unsupported by elegance and distinction—an unfailingly good heart, a well-judging mind, a shrewd grasp of the essentials of character. It is from Mrs. Jennings's mouth that the final verdicts on Willoughby, Mrs. Ferrars and her daughter, and other leading characters proceed.

Now the two daughters are not meant to be plausible persons; they have the function of providing contrasts favourable to their mother. Mrs. Palmer is good-humoured like her mother without being vulgar, but she is consistently silly, so her mother's good sense stands out, not only in itself but serving as a kind of sub-

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stitute for taste and delicacy. Lady Middleton has to have the manners and appearance and conversation of a well-bred woman, in contrast to her mother's lack of formality and social decorum (which Jane Austen valued), but her cold-heartedness and insipidity make her mother's lack of elegance seem desirable later on, as Lady Middleton's purely social values lead her from bad to worse (ending with a friendship for Fanny Dashwood and seeking the acquaintance of Mrs. Willoughby). If Marianne was deceived in the romantic hero Willoughby, she was equally astray, we gather, in her estimate of the unattractive members of her circle. Once Marianne's judgment is righted, Mr. Palmer behaves considerately, Sir John is seen to be not merely a sporting brute, even Mrs. Palmer has something to be said for her. But Marianne ' in her new character of candour ' goes so far as to reproach herself for injustice even to her relatives-in-law, John and Fanny, who have been exhibited as wholly detestable; this strikes the reader as excessive and betrays that the author is trying to convince herself as well as us that *any* instinctive dislike of people as individuals should be smothered in our obligation to fit in with society. There are plenty of other clues that she was arguing with herself as well as us, and at the end of her life she was to write an anti-*Sense and Sensibility* called *The Elliots* (which though it was not at her death ready for the press was published by her brother as *Persuasion*).

In short, by examining how she worked we can determine what kind of a novelist she was, by looking to see how she wrote a novel we can discover what her object was in writing it. Without such a preliminary no criticism of her novels can be just or even safe. A small instance of how far astray criticism may go is the treatment that had been given to the problem of the last chapter of *Mansfield Park*. Every reader is puzzled by something odd about it which is felt to jar on the mood created by the rest of the book, and critics have produced various justifying explanations, from aesthetic to psychological, which satisfy no one and are in fact misleading. Actually its ill-assorted tone is vestigial. *Mansfield Park* was written up from *Lady Susan* but much later in life and in a different convention, with a correspondingly different attitude to its material. The early form has a conclusion identical in tone and parallel in content with the concluding chapter of *Mansfield Park*, and in *Lady Susan* it is exactly in keeping with the nature of the original under-

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taking. It remains in *Mansfield Park* as the least assimilated and most discordant therefore of all the parts of that unsatisfactory but instructive novel. The novelist in the early draft was, as always at this stage, outside, and hostile to her material. Either from fatigue or pressure of work (*Pride and Prejudice* still on her hands, *Emma* already imminent) the original conclusion did not receive the necessary transposition. Its spirit remains that of 'Lesley Castle' and *Northanger Abbey*, with the sardonic tone and impatient handling that characterise the earlier stages of her compositions, due to their prevailingly satiric origin.

Q. D. LEAVIS.

[A further study of Jane Austen's methods of composition, '*Lady Susan* into *Mansfield Park*' will appear in the September number.]

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

THE PROBLEM OF CARRYING ON.

Inserted on a separate slip in this number will be found an appeal to readers, on the response to which the continuance of *Scrutiny* depends. The difficulty dealt with there is not the only one with which we have to grapple. The June *Scrutiny* is late because of the difficulty of maintaining, under war-conditions, the essential collaboration with a sufficient team. However, we are now satisfied that we shall be able to cope with that problem, and to continue *Scrutiny* through another year—*if only we can recruit a hundred more subscribers.*

The deficiency on the reviewing side, due to the oddity of the Spring publishing season, we hope to correct in the September number.

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BARTOK ON WAX

Quartet No. 2, by Béla Bartók, played by the Budapest String Quartet (H.M.V. DB 2842-45) [29/6 including Purchase Tax.]

In my article on *Mahler as Key-Figure,* published in the last (March) number of *Scrutiny,* I suggested that it was possible that Bartók might be the most important composer with reference to the immediate future of musical language because the technique explored in his later works ' reconciles a legitimate extension of the classical, eighteenth century, melodic conception of dissonance with principles of line-drawing comparable with those of Asiatic music, so that he provides a half-way house between . . . the traditional European world and the hypothetical more international future that may be presaged in some duodecuple music.'

Of the European aspect of Bartók—the modification of tradition, the extension of the tonal implications of the diatonic triad by the adoption of the principle of the unresolved melodic appogiatura, producing a juxtaposition of tonalities without polytonality—an admirably lucid account is given in an article by Henry Pleasants and Tibor Serly, published in *New Music* for March, 1940. Of the Asiatic element I do not know any authoritative account; but, connecting up with his early preoccupation with the ancient tradition of Magyar folk-song, it is increasingly demonstrable through the evolution of his oeuvre, both in the pervasively tritonal contour of some of his linear phrases, and in certain devices of structure and development—for instance, the rotary movement of a phrase round a fixed point, gradually generating other and more complex figurations.

One of the most important of the transitional works that led to the consummation of Bartók's later manner is the *Second String Quartet,* of which a performance by the Budapest Quartet has recently been recorded by H.M.V. Here there are still traces of Debussyan harmony in the music's more exotic and elegiac qualities, and there is an intensity of nervous shock in some of the dissonances. But these dissonances are no longer rhythmic in motive but are the result of a prevailing polyphonic structure, and however fiercely contorted the line of the lyricism may grow it retains subtle contact with the diatonic triad—hence, perhaps, the

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almost uncanny mysteriousness of the pizzicato minor triads at the very end.

What is most remarkable, however, is the extraordinarily close and concentrated organization of the supple and virile, if ' difficult ' lyrical lines—an elliptical concentration which, along with the music's lonely austerity, has provoked comparison with the late Beethoven quartets and the *4th Symphony* of Sibelius. (The building up of the climax to the *moderato* entails a startlingly Sibelian moto perpetuo, as the notes to the records point out). This first movement must be one of the most tightly knit structures in twentieth century music. Starting from a simple flowing six-eight rhythm and a figure in rising fourths, the metrical elaborations of the opening phrases grow increasingly more distraught, and the progressions involved in the linear arabesques around them gradually more dissonant, until a passionate and agonized climax is attained with the ultimate degree of dissonance of the major seventh. Violent contrasts of mood—agitated or tender—are compressed within the stringent development; and then the tension subsides, relatively homophonically, by way of lyrical (rather than rhythmic) extensions of the opening fourths, into a coda at once icily serene and disturbingly beautiful.

The scherzo contains a good deal of unison writing and some rhythmic dissonances in Bartók's earlier manner, but never loses a lyrical flexibility and drive which, at the close of the slow trio-like section, swirls the weeping, fragmentary phrases into an astounding spectral *sotto voce* passage. The final *lento* consummates the mood of the end of the first movement. Again it grows out of the simplest (two-note) progression, and is completely undemonstrative. Yet it has a glassy and terrible calm, a latent violence, which makes most of the music written contemporaneously with it sound like child's play—as, indeed, relatively speaking, most of it is. Though this quartet is well over twenty years old it is as overwhelmingly powerful to-day as when first it was heard, because in it a creative intensity is grappling with the basic problems of musical structure. Bartók's music is often desolate and painful but it is, in its vigorous integrity, joyful too. He is more than a vividly contemporary composer (though he is that remarkably), for, if we place Sibelius among the ' great masters ' mainly on the strength of the *4th Symphony*, I do not see that we can any longer deny such a position

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to Bartók. Alone with Berg of the one-time ' modernists ' he has acquired the dignity of classical status.

It remains to add that performance and recording are worthy of Bartók's mastery of the sound-medium of string quartet; in other words they are magnificent. That these records should be issued at any time would be notable: that they should be issued now surely marks a step in gramophonic history. I hope all those concerned about music and civilization to-day will consider it their duty to buy these records, and that such people who read these words will persuade their friends who mightn't read them to buy the records too. Then we'll be justified in asking H.M.V. to follow up this venture with recordings of the most significant of all works in the matured Bartókian idiom—the *4th* or *5th Quartet,* the *Divertimento* for strings and the *Suite* for strings, celesta and percussion.

The Delius Society announces that, through the agency of the Columbia Gramophone Company, it intends to record Delius's opera *A Village Romeo and Juliet,* complete in two volumes. This project can only be carried through if all the present members of the Society promise to buy the records; and I appeal here to other people who might be interested in the scheme to write letters of encouragement to Columbia. It is a very noble undertaking to record the whole of one of Delius's biggest and most remote compositions, especially in the present circumstances. The lonely yet intimate character of this beautiful music should be congenial to recorded treatment, particularly if performance and recording are comparable with those of earlier volumes of the Society. It is to be hoped that cultivated people will not let this project die.

W. H. MELLERS.

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LOUIS MACNEICE

PLANT AND PHANTOM. Poems by Louis MacNeice (*Faber & Faber,* 6/-).

> But none of any of all the stars above me
> Can drive the war away

says Mr. MacNeice, and many of these poems can be related to just that wistful helplessness. There is a strong suggestion of self-indulgence in Mr. MacNeice's contrasts between his present vague disturbance and past tranquillity; the latter is therefore quite appropriately described in the manner of Rupert Brooke—

> Forgetfulness: brass lamps and copper jugs
> And home-made bread and smell of turf and flax . . .

This sort of attempt to encourage the old, familiar response by the old, familiar symbols comes near to parody, but is certainly offered in a serious and uncritical spirit. A similar absence of sensitive discrimination is apparent throughout this volume. It shows itself clearly in the first poem of the ' Trilogy for X,' where the poet's own experience in the last verse differs very little in quality or complexity from the cheap and shallow experience of the ' clerks and navvies ' in the first—

> When clerks and navvies fondle
> Besides canals their wenches
> In rapture and in coma
> The haunches that they handle . . .

from

> Close as an eyelid fasten
> My body in darkness darling:
> Switch off the light and let me
> Gather you up and gather
> The power of trains advancing . . .

Some of his rhythmic effects are astonishly crude—

> The luck and pluck and plunge of blood
> The wealth and spilth and sport of breath . . .

and elsewhere the lack of subtlety and variation in tempo corresponds to the apparent superficiality and loose organization of the poet's

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experience. Mr. MacNeice diffuses his little energy by distending, elaborating, and ornamenting the most trite of sentiments and ideas. It is not enough for him to say twice

> The bell was silent in the air.

He must add

> Holding its inverted poise—
> Between the clang and clang a flower
> A brazen calyx of no noise.

The prevalence in this volume of heavily artificial ' poetic diction ' of this kind—though usually leavened with modern slickness—suggests little possibility of further development of more than literary-historical interest. In the poem ' Meeting Point ' from which the quotation comes, there is a startling incongruity between the ponderous lines above and the simple sentimentality of the conclusion—

> And all the room aglow because
> Time was away, and she was here.

In the poem ' Plurality ' there is a comparable transition from

> A thing, a beast, a man is what it is because
> It is something that began and is not what it was,
> Yet is itself throughout, fluttering and unfurled,
> Not to be cancelled out, not to be merged in world,
> Its entity a denial of all that is not it . . .

to the final words on Man—

> Conscious of waste of labour, conscious of spite and hate,
> Of dissension with his neighbour, of beggars at the gate . . .
> Not completely conscious but partly—that is much.

It is clearly not enough for the production of distinguished poetry. Occasionally one finds a few lines of neatly recorded impressions of a scene or sensation, but they are almost obscured by the collapse of more ambitious projects. He lacks the restraint which might enable him to develop the limited success of

> Pigeons courting, the cock
> Like an eighteenth-century marquis

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Puffing his breast and dragging
His fantail waltzwise;

and attempts to be profound, with disastrous results—

You talk of Ultimate Value, Universal Form—
Visions, let me tell you, that ride upon the storm . . .

Mr. MacNeice neither thinks nor feels precisely or originally enough for this sort of thing; it would be to his advantage to confine himself to simple journalism in verse.

R. G. LIENHARDT.

THE OX IN SPAIN

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS, by Ernest Hemingway (*Cape*, 9/-).

To Have and to Have Not was such a wickedly bad book that one began to despair of Mr. Hemingway's reputation. It was chaotic and it was insincere; and chaos and insincerity are not faults typical of his work. It is his neatness, his condensation, his honesty in accepting the stringent limitations of the extravagantly simple values he starts from, that have given his writing that restricted power and coherence which it may be said, at its best, to possess. For Mr. Hemingway can manage his own little estate with commendable efficiency, fearless of bulls and aggressive intruders; only outside the well-fenced paddock lurk dangers against which his brand of courage is helpless. We can see from *To Have and to Have Not* how, seeking to manage wider issues, he ceases to manage anything, least of all himself.

We might have thought Mr. Hemingway's day was over, yet now comes *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, selling umpteen thousand copies and being transformed into a film on the one hand, and on the other being acclaimed by the highbrow critics as his most adult work to date, a major contribution and one of the great novels of the twentieth century. Now it is true that the book contains an amount of admirably clean and efficient writing, and that it is by a very hefty piece Mr. Hemingway's most extensive work of fiction; but it is not necessarily condemnatory if one adds that in no other respect should the book be referred to as ' great.'

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The Spanish war presented Mr. Hemingway with what used to be known as a golden opportunity, because it enabled him to elaborate his stock counters and typical situations with a detailed precision and authenticity which came from first-hand experience—to turn reporting, as he has so often done, into a small kind of art. I have written previously in *Scrutiny* (December, 1939) of what I take to be the essence of the Hemingway situation and the Hemingway world and there is no need to restate it. But it is important to stress that the new book deals in precisely similar counters—that in my opinion any talk of more complex and delicate values cannot be substantiated from the text. The hero, it is true, is a university professor who has moved in more exalted circles than (say) the hero of *A Farewell to Arms:* but his background of ' old evenings in cafés, chestnut trees that would be in bloom now in this month . . . book-shops, kiosks, galleries, the Park Montsouris, the Stade Buffalo, the Butte Chaumont ' and so forth, is not so far from the ' light and cleanness and order ' which have always been Mr. Hemingway's positives, and is very close indeed to the cosmopolitan world of the curious creatures that made up the personnel of books like *Fiesta*. Obviously, being ' formally educated and well-bred ' or well-read won't turn a starling into a popinjay; and that Robert Jordan lives fundamentally by the values of the Hemingway code is stated explicitly in a conversation which he has with Pilar:

> ' You are a very cold boy.'
> No, he said, I do not think so.
> No. In the head you are very cold.
> It is that I am very preoccupied with my work.
> But you do not like the things of life?
> Yes. Very much. But not to interfere with my work.
> You like to drink, I know. I have seen.
> Yes. Very much. But not to interfere with my work.
> And women?
> I like them very much, but I have not given them much importance.

Jordan is too, then, the Hollywooden Hero: in a moment I will discuss his relation to the particular situation described in this novel.

The story tells how a young American fighting for the

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Republican cause is engaged upon the dynamiting of a bridge in a desolate mountain pass. He is living with, and is helped by, a band of peasants who have been waging guerilla warfare under the leadership of a somewhat dissipated desperado called Pablo. During the few days that comprise the action he has a brief love-affair with a girl, Maria, whom the peasants have rescued from the Fascists, there is anxiety over the weather and suspected treachery on the part of Pablo; but the bridge is finally blown and the band seeks to make its escape. During the migration Jordan is shot in the leg, the girl and the band are persuaded to continue their journey, and Jordan is left with a sub-machine gun to await the arrival of the Fascists and his death. It is not, you see, a cheerful story, especially since the utility of the bridge-blowing operation, on which the whole action hinges, in invalidated by the fact that the intended Government attack has been betrayed to the Fascists in advance. But the tragedy is as much that of the Spanish people as it is Jordan's. They are all people deprived of home and creed and the traditions of civilized life: the Spanish war is interpreted—it is one possible interpretation—as the most fundamental Hemingway situation.

Much has been written of Mr. Hemingway's understanding of the mentality of the Spanish people, probably justly enough. But that is not, I think, the point. Hemingway uses his Spaniards in a kind of choric fashion, their stylized speech being another version of the stylization of the Hemingway language. On the whole this chorus, particularly Anselmo, seems to indicate the attitude to a disintegrating society which Mr. Hemingway himself regards as most praiseworthy or (as he would say) 'honourable.' Anselmo, torn from his Catholic God and finding no other salvation, is in a sense the central figure, whose significance is summarized in any of his reflections on the moral implications of the war:

> 'Clearly I miss Him, having been brought up in religion. But now a man must be responsible to himself . . . I think that after the war there will have to be some great penance done for the killing. If we no longer have religion after the war then I think there must be some form of civic penance organised that all may be cleansed from the killing or else we will never have a true and human basis for living.'

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Pilar also speaks of man's inevitable reliance on humanity (' Everyone needs to talk to someone. Before we had religion and other nonsense. Now for everyone there should be someone to whom one can speak frankly, for all the valour that one could have one becomes very alone '), while among the minor characters Andres reflects:

> ' I think that we are born into a time of great difficulty. I think any other time was probably easier. One suffers little because all of us have been formed to resist suffering . . . But I would like to have it so that I could tie a handkerchief to that bush back there and come in the daylight and take the eggs and put them under a hen and be able to see the chicks of the partridge in my own courtyard. I would like such small and regular things . . . But you have no house and no courtyard to your no-house, he thought. You have no family but a brother who goes to battle to-morrow and you own nothing but the wind and the sun and an empty belly.'

This kind of attitude is summarized by Fernando when he says ' we must teach them. We must take away their planes, their automatic weapons, their tanks, their artillery, and teach them dignity,' and it is clear from all these passages that the key-words—valour, honour, dignity—do not apply specifically to the Spanish peasant but are ones which we have long been familiar with in Hemingway's writings, even though, with reference to an ancient and primitive civilization, they acquire, perhaps, a more gloomy poignancy. In any case Fernando is left ' standing there alone with his dignity ' and it seems that for the good and brave of heart there is but little consolation. Anselmo himself is blown up with the futile destruction of the bridge, and Pilar achieves no spiritual victory. (' Neither bull force nor bull courage lasted, she knew now, and what did last? I last, she thought. Yes, I have lasted. But for what? '). The ' simple ' nobility of Anselmo's attitude is if anything more tired and limp in its prose rhythm than anything comparable with it in Hemingway's American or cosmopolitan world. For the believers in civilized society, however extravagantly simple-hearted, there is not, in a chaotic world, much hope.

If Anselmo and Pilar have nothing to turn to in the last resort but friendship and a human solidarity which will enable them to

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endure, Jordan himself attempts to live relatively successfully in a directionless universe by the process of ignoring anything which will be prejudicial to efficiency in the execution of a material duty. ' I am not of those who suffer ' he says, and it is noteworthy that whenever he indulges in relatively noble reflections he immediately pricks the bubble with a pin of cynicism. (' You learned the dry-mouthed, fear-purged, purging ecstasy of battle and you fought that summer for all the poor in the world, against all tyranny . . . It was in those days that you had a deep and sound and selfless pride—that would have made you a bloody bore at Gaylord's, he thought suddenly.') Because he is more sophisticated than Anselmo, he is also less serious: intellectually conscious of the hopes he fights for, of the futility of fighting, and of the imminence of death, whereas Anselmo emotionally accepts death and failure without rancour or bitterness, he must forget his friends and even his love in the pursuance of his duty, must pursue the maximum of sensation that is offered by a life that is taut on the brink of extincton. Such a conception has, no doubt, its compensations. If Anselmo—and Pilar too for all her resolution—is calm, fatalistically resigned and very tired, the fine-drawn wire of Jordan's existence tingles with a precarious joy. Partly of course it is joy in the ' Now and ever now,' in sensation, whether the sensation of desire that is ' smooth and young and lovely ' or of the smell of smoked leather or of ground in spring after rain. ' If you love this girl as much as you say you do you had better love her very hard and make up in intensity what the relation will lack in duration and continuity,' he says in a passage which gives intimation of another of the Hemingway key-words, for being ' gay ' is a sign of something too, ' like having immortality while you were still alive.' Yet this alone does not indicate the quality of the joy I have in mind and perhaps this short sentence conveys more accurately the blindingly clear nervous frenzy in which the closing section of the book takes place: ' He lay there holding her very lightly, feeling her breathe and feeling her heart beat, and keeping track of the time on his wrist watch.' It is like a white heady wine and death brings merely the release from tension. (' He felt empty and drained and exhausted from all of it and from them going and his mouth tasted of bile. Now finally and at last there was no problem . . . I wish they would come, he thought. I do not want to get in any mixed up state before

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they come '). It is revealing to compare this typical Hemingway exit with the death of Sordo. Waiting to die, Jordan thinks actively of what he had done and not done and of the necessity of *not* thinking at all: Sordo does not need to tell himself not to think, it is sufficient to feel conscious of the life which death negates. (' Dying was nothing and he had no picture of it nor fear of it in his mind. But living was a field of grain blowing in the wind on the side of a hill. Living was a hawk in the sky. Living was an earthen jar of water in the dust of the threshing with the grain flailed out and the chaff blowing . . .').

The clear cold frenzy which is the final impression left by this story of the inevitable abnegation of human ties and beliefs, this evocation of the still, painful ticking of the clock, is revealed through the curiously stealthy tread of Mr. Hemingway's prose, which we can examine in a simple passage of description:

> ' Earlier in the evening he had taken the axe and gone outside of the cave and walked through the new snow to the edge of the clearing and cut down a small spruce tree. In the dark he had dragged it, butt first, to the lee of the rock wall. There close to the rock, he had held the tree upright, holding the trunk firm with one hand, and, holding the axe-shaft close to the head had lopped off all the boughs until he had a pile of them. Then, leaving the pile of boughs, he had laid the bare pole of the trunk down in the snow and gone into the cave to get a slab of wood he had seen against the wall. With this slab he scraped the ground clear of the snow along the rock wall and then picked up his boughs and shaking them clean of snow laid them in rows, like overlapping plumes, until he had a bed. He put the pole across the foot of the bough bed to hold the branches in place and pegged it firm with two pointed pieces of wood he split from the edge of the slab. Then he carried the slab and the axe back into the cave, ducking under the blanket as he came in and leaned them both against the wall.'

It is difficult to explain why this passage seems to me effective when most of the then-he-took-two-paces-forward-and-then-he-took-three-paces-back school of writing seems so utterly spurious, except that through the organization of the rhythm of the paragraph allied with the meticulous clarity of the detail an emotional aura is generated to

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what appears to be pure statement. However this may be, stretched to a wider canvas—embracing the ultimate degree of physical violence and the simpler type of psychological clash—this delicate step, this cat-like precision, this photogenic clarity, gradually creates a resilient intensity, an impression of the painful isolation of even those who do their best to evade the difficulties with which life to-day might beset them. The process is so gradual that the stylized prose and the stylized dialect, continuing for hundreds of pages without the slightest variation of tempo or mood, are extraordinarily boring to read at long stretches—and the stretches must necessarily be much longer than in the short stories. Yet the boringness is maybe the condition of a certain kind of success, the slow unfolding of action paralleling the slow exfoliation of the prose; at least one can't imagine the end being as effective as it is except as the consummation of that laborious growth. Although I think Mr. Hemingway should restrict himself to short stories where the accuracy of his reporter's eye and his limitation of emotional range help rather than hinder him, I think one must also admit that if he is going to write a long novel the boringness of this one is implicit in the nature of his premises. Actually this book itself contains a number of excellent shorts—for instance some of the political portraits and, finest of all, the terrifying objective account of the massacre of Sordo and his band.

One thing is certain: treated with the honesty which is appropriate to it, this book should make a superb film. It has plenty of violent action, it is built around a single theme and an extravagantly simple but coherent scale of values, it conveys most of its point through a narrowly formalized dialogue, and, most of all, it is extraordinarily photogenic even in the texture of its prose which produces—if I am not giving too subjective an account—an effect of transparent white light with sharply defined shadows. Mr. Hemingway himself can be trusted to insist on the piebald and to stamp vigorously on any suggestion of gorgeous technicolour; Mr. Gary Cooper can play the ox to perfection ; and (given the opportunity as he may be) Mr. Aaron Copland, who wrote such intelligent and distinguished scores to *Of Mice and Men* and *Our Town*, could compose for it some transparently stringent and cinematic music.

W. H. MELLERS.

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SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF SCIENCE, by J. G. Crowther (*Macmillan*, 16/-).

Although this book is not at all meant to be a history of science, the first part does, in fact, survey the early, mediaeval and more recent history of (mainly physical and chemical) science. Dr. Crowther provides valuable insight into the complicated inter-relationships between the growing societies and the scientific, or proto-scientific, knowledge which they produced. He comes to the conclusion that science, as we understand it, germinated in the mediaeval period, its birth being completed in the seventeenth century. 'Since then, no fundamental innovation has been made in its method.' Its rise is put down to the re-establishment of the repute of manual labour, in spite of the contempt of large sections of society: this made possible some fusion of classical theory and conscious experiment.

The later parts of the book attempt to show in more detail the social background in the later growth of science. Readers of Professor Bernal's[1] and other books will find much that is familiar. Here however, it is presented with different emphasis and much of it in greater detail. Important examples of the process of modern physical research, both in the industrial and the academic laboratory, are reviewed. Although one might debate the weighting of the various factors, the existence of the web of inter-relationships is undeniable. In fact, it could usefully have been developed more fully. Whilst trying to avoid undue bias as a biologist, I still feel that more reference to the biological sciences should have been given (one might instance the points made in his rapid survey by Professor Bernal when he indicated the significant parts which these sciences have played). The omission was evident also in Dr. Crowther's earlier books (*British Scientists of the 19th Century* and *Famous American Men of Science*) where he found no biological scientists (in the broader sense) of sufficient importance to be included. Perhaps there he had some justification in view of the limitations of time and nationality, but when dealing with the

[1] J. D. Bernal, *The Social Function of Science* (reviewed in *Scrutiny*, June, 1939.)

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social relations of sciences as such there seems to be less excuse. Were, for example, the researches of Pasteur really worth only a paragraph in comparison with those of Cockroft? Has, again, the growth of theoretical and practical genetics had so little effect that it should receive no mention? Even if we omit these and other matters, the very slowness of the advance of Biology to which he has earlier referred provides one of the best examples of the relations within science, since it was dependent so largely on the stage of development of the other sciences.

However this may be, he considers ' that science is a determining factor in the destiny of mankind, so scientists and other members of the community have now the decisive responsibility of seeing that it is used for good and not for evil.' Science needs an ' effective social policy,' scientists having social responsibilities which include (a) exposure of the errors in science and in social movements by the organization of a co-operative intellectual criticism, (b) planning of social improvement, (c) demonstration of the relations between science and social affairs, (d) making contact with administrations for the effective use of science in policy, (e) in war to further the side which ' is the less inimical to science ' and in peace ' to co-operate with all constructive social and intellectual movements, expand science and remove the causes of war.'

The increasing favour towards the ' planned society ' since the last war has led to many discussions regarding the possible dangers of planning, both for research ' itself ' and for society ' as a whole.' In apparent fear of an organized ' Brave New World,' some scientists would seem to favour completely *laissez-faire* research as the best means of achieving—what? This leads us to the essence of the problem. Towards the one extreme Professor Polanyi can say 'I, for one, can recognize nothing more holy than scientific truth, and consider it a danger to science and humanity if the pursuit of pure science, regardless of society, is denied by a representative organ of science ' (*Nature*, Jan. 25, 1941, p. 119). Towards the other Professor Bernal considers that ' Science implies a unified and co-ordinated and, above all, conscious control of the whole of social life ' (*The Social Function of Science*, p. 409). Between such views (and they are not the most extreme) there is so great a confusion regarding the use of the word ' science ' (or regarding the communication effected when it is used) that it becomes almost meaningless

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Professor Polanyi may indeed adopt the search for truth as an end in itself, *for him,* but the effects of ' pure ' physical research upon society, however pure the intentions, could hardly be exaggerated—certainly not to the inhabitants of a bombed city.

The arguments for planning in general seem to be unanswerable, though Dr. Crowther has pointed out that this will not best be gained by scientists turning politicians, and Professor Bernal has emphasized that the plans should allow for the social equivalent of pure research. In particular Dr. Crowther emphasizes the need now for more reflection and synthesis after the avid collection of facts. The most urgent necessity, however, is for an aim in the plan, and this receives less attention than it deserves. It is not so much the absence of specified aims, as the common implication that science, as usually understood, can best formulate those aims. The fear that plans may become accessory to the demands of ' baser ' emotions has sound foundations, although it can be countered by other fears that a scientific society might become ' soulless.' The argument goes on whilst the results of a largely unplanned research are already being used to render some sides of the problem irrelevant. One solution seems obvious, but has too rarely received attention. This is that the ' ends ' of science (or the intellect) and the emotions should be harmonious. The point of this would be lost if we do not see that, in fact, these ends are and always have been identical, since intellect and emotions (however much in opposition) have always drawn human beings towards the ends they have gained. Ends, of one sort or another, are reached even in the absence of integrity of purpose: mental confusion, however, has resulted in an appearance of separation which may well prove disastrous.

Christopher Caudwell (in spite of a tendency to mysticism and some attitudes with which one may not agree) seems to have thrown useful light on these relationships, and draws a comparison between the emotional, or artistic, and the scientific sides of life. Both he says are built to some extent upon an illusion. Whilst both are attempts to interpret the world, both trying to understand the relation between subject and object (or the struggle of man with nature), yet both are necessarily abstractions from reality. In science the illusion is bound up with the process of ' isolation ' of one part of the environment in order to study how it works. But the world is

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a whole, and there never was an isolated part (not even the observer) although in physical science often useful generalizations can be built up in this way. Similarly there is an illusion in art which lies in the isolation from the rest of the world of the artist, who is the subject: his emotions and reactions to the rest of the world, his environment, are the subject of contemplation, and from these experiences generalizations are implied. If we think of literature and language it becomes clearer how the arts and science do, or should interact. Language or symbols are used in both, and in both it has become all too possible for the symbols to be so far abstracted from reality that not only does the artist or the scientist become isolated from the rest of the world, but the symbols become used at last for their own sake. This can account for much of the gulf which exists between the poet and his audience, or the scientist and his public. As used for communication, language, whether it be the symbolism of the artist or the scientist, is not simply an image of reality—it does not simply express rather crudely what reality is. It involves attitudes to it and implies what can be done with reality—a matter of judgment. Here lies the importance of the arts, whether of literature or otherwise. They more specifically set up human standards arising from human emotions or feelings when confronted with the external world. From them we can obtain a guide to our actions and motives—they will help to supply us with the purpose for our plans and, by this interaction, they are likely to modify those plans. The language (or symbolism) of art and science were once more closely related than they are now: symbols were almost certainly common to the two. It seems likely that all members of society were conversant in both in ways which we can hardly grasp to-day, when not only is science poles apart from, for example, poetry but both are beyond the reach of the general public. Only in a fully co-operative society will such an approach be possible again since only there can the necessary basis for adequate communication be possible. Both poetry and science provide the most acute results of our interactions with the rest of the world and with each other: they will only grow and mature if they arise through conscious thought in active union with practice and if they are intelligible to the rest of society. Union between them is only possible through an education based on language, the means of communicating either scientific or emotional knowledge of the universe.

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I have previously commented upon the casual way in which the arts are dismissed by scientists or even, as Profesor Bernal seemed to imply, 'incorporated' into science. A tendency to academic specialization (which they so often deplore on other grounds), mixed too often with genuine ignorance, may lead to this attitude. It implies an incomplete understanding of the complexity of social inter-relationships and for Dr. Crowther, at least, this seems to be reflected in his undue bias for the physical sciences. It seems likely that a more biological approach might have prevented this limited field of reference, since the biological sciences are contributing greatly to the appreciation and, more slowly, to the understanding of integration within the whole. However this may be, there is all too little in this book to suggest the important links between the arts and sciences. Two points to which he has drawn attention are however significant. He has justifiably been impressed by the views of the founders of the Royal Society in 1662. Amongst other things they aimed at 'a bare knowledge of things' using 'a close, naked, natural way of speaking; positive expressions; clear senses; a native easiness . . . preferring the language of artizans, countrymen, and merchants, before that of wits, or scholars.' In view of the well-known difficulties of communication between scientists themselves (and from scientists to the public), together with the not so well appreciated difficulties responsible for the general breakdown in effective social communication, this is a welcome reminder.

The other point is more implied than fully stated when he says 'the belief that modern scientific method is perfect is probably mistaken . . . It is possible that the next advance towards this improved scientific method may be found through a combination of the present scientific method, which is generally conceived as independent of society, with social understanding.' If understanding is to be real, it will need to derive more from the arts than scientists are usually willing to allow. Scientists are usually thought to be concerned with the discovery of the 'new,' although this may concern new knowledge of the past. The arts have been concerned more with tradition and the past, although they point also towards the future. Both are concerned with human actuality and potentiality.

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SCRUTINY is published by the Editors, 6 Chesterton Hall Crescent, Cambridge; distributed by Deighton, Bell & Co., Ltd., Trinity Street, Cambridge; and printed by S. G. Marshall & Son, Round Church St., Cambridge, England.

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